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THE
POSTHUMOUS WORKS

Of the late LEARNED

CONYERS MIDDLETON, D.D.

CONTAINING,

- I. Reflections on the Dispute between St. Peter and St. Paul.
- II. Reflections on the Variations or Inconsistencies among the four Evangelists.
- III. An Essay on the Gift of Tongues.
- IV. Remarks on the Story concerning St. John and Cerinthus.
- V. An Essay on the Allegorical and Literal Interpretation of the Creation and Fall of Man.
- VI. De Latinarum Literarum Pronunciatione Dissertatio.
- VII. A Preface to an intended Answer to all the Objections made against the Free Inquiry.
- VIII. Letters to Mr. Warburton, &c.



L O N D O N,

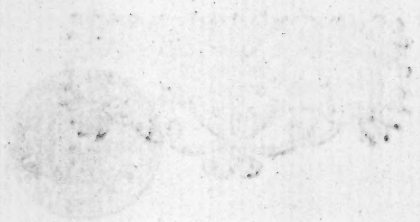
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FOR THE
CONGRESS

- I. The Committee on the Judiciary
- II. The Committee on the Senate
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FOR THE
SENATE OF THE
UNITED STATES

SOME
CURSORY REFLECTIONS
ON THE
DISPUTE OR DISSENSION,

Which happened at

A N T I O C H,

Between the

APOSTLES *PETER* and *PAUL*.

AND

On the Variations also or Inconsistencies, which are found among
the Four Evangelists, in their different Accounts of the same
Facts ;

In order to discover

What Light these Facts afford Us, towards illustrating the proper Notion
of Inspiration, or that Measure of it especially which was indulged to
the Apostles and Evangelists, and how far they may be of Use if
rightly interpreted, towards determining the Controversies which have
been raised concerning the Proofs and Evidences of the Christian Re-
ligion, as far at least as they depend upon the Prophecies of the Old
Testament, which are cited for that Purpose in the New.

A

SOME

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What Light these Facts afford us, towards illustrating the proper Notion
of Inspiration, or that Assistance of it especially which was granted to
the Apostles and Evangelists; and how far they may be of Use to
rightly interpret, connect, and determine the Controversies which
have arisen concerning the Words and Expressions of the Christian Re-
ligion, in so far as they depend upon the Prophecies of the Old
Testament, which are cited for that Purpose in the New.

P R Æ F A C E.

SEVERAL of these pieces, which compose this Volume, were written by me many years ago ; chiefly for my own information, on the occasion of certain controversies, then warmly agitated, concerning *the grounds and reasons* of the Christian religion ; and especially on the prophecies of the Old Testament, which are cited in the New, and applied to the particular acts and circumstances of our Saviour's life. For when the enemies of revelation attempted to discredit those citations, as being neither fairly made, nor rightly applied ; and our Divines, on the other hand, had nothing to offer in the defence of them, in which a man of sense could reasonably acquiesce ; I was willing to try, whether, from my own examination of the case, I might not be able to draw out something more satisfactory ; and if no solution of the difficulty could be found in the citations themselves, whether it might not be drawn from the characters of the Evangelists, who made and applied them— for this topic, I knew, tho' intimately connected with the quæstion, was, what none of our common Advocates would venture to touch upon : whose fortunes in the Church depend, not on seeking out what is true, but on defending what is established ; and on inventing expedients to puzzle, where they cannot confute an Adversary. But truth, as the Antients tell us, lies buried in the deep, and cannot be discovered, but by searching things to the bottom : and when

produced to the public view, shines always the brightest, after it has been polished, as *Tully* says, by the *file of disputation*.

As to the effect of my searches into the particular subject here intimated, it is fully explained in the following sheets. For tho' the controversies, which gave birth to them, have long since been at an end, yet I flatter myself, that they may still be seasonable and serviceable, towards checking that spirit of disaffection, which, in every part of the Kingdom, is visibly exerting itself, against the established religion, by all the various arts, which Popery, methodism and infidelity can supply : the growth of all which has of late years been greatly complained of by the Clergy. For as this increasing evil is owing, partly to certain articles, publicly professed and imposed by our Church, which are justly liable to exception ; and partly to groundless prejudices, and false notions of religion in general, conceived by the weak, and confirmed in them by the crafty ; so it cannot possibly be cured by any other method, than by placing the common religion of Christians on it's right foundation, the Gospel, and clearing our particular system of it from all just offence, and reducing it to it's original simplicity and conformity with the natural law or reason of man ; which, in all quæstions whatsoever, is the primary guide and ultimate test of right and wrong, truth and falsehood to the whole human species.

In the Heathen world, tho' there were always many Infidels and Heretics with regard to the established religion, there were no Dissenters from the established modes of worship, and very little disturbance given to the State by the intemperance of their religious contests : yet this was not owing to a want of zeal for the popular religion, in any order of men, for they
all

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all professed the greatest, but to a reasonable way of thinking and acting with respect to it. The wiser sort were universally of opinion, that the multitude were to be deceived and allured to their duty, by fictions and fabulous tales, contrived to instill a superstitious reverence for the rites of their Ancestors, and a firm belief of their divine origin. This therefore was the common principle of all the politer nations, and particularly of the antient Romans; whose religion seems, of all others, to have been the best calculated, to promote the general good and prosperity of the Republic [a]. But tho' they were persuaded of the necessity of putting this deceit upon the populace, they thought it necessary at the same time, that the better sort should be treated in a different manner: with which view, while they enjoined a strict observance of their country's rites, as an indispensable duty on all, they made no scruple, to laugh at the folly of those, who took them for divine, and to publish their free sentiments upon them without any reserve; that all the liberal part of their fellow-citizens might understand, on what ground their religion stood, and by being of one mind, on a subject so interesting, might live with more ease to themselves, and good will towards each other.

Thus in the writings of *Cicero*, *Varro*, and others, we see the most sacred articles of their religion ridiculed with a freedom, which is apt to surprize us, till we reflect on the motives of it, and perceive, that it gave no scandal to men even of the strictest virtue and morality: for writings of this kind never reach to the multitude, or disturb the course of the popular worship; being read onely by a few in comparison, of a specu-

[a] Hæc Pontifex (Sævola) nosse populos non vult — expedire igitur existimat, saltem in religione Civitates, quod di-

cere etiam in libris rerum divinarum ipse Varro non dubitat. August. de Civ. D. I. 4. c. 27.

lative and philosophic turn ; who reap no small pleasure, to find themselves at liberty to think freely and rationally on subjects, which fill the minds of the vulgar with anxious scruples and superstitious fears.

Now as this conduct of the Heathens procured both peace and reverence to their false religions, so it may furnish some usefull hints for our conduct, with regard to the true one : whose superior excellence and allowed divinity should oblige us to guard it with the stricter care, from all mixture of human inventions. If any thing therefore of this sort has ever been introduced into it, through the inadvertence, or political views of it's guardians ; or any thing inserted, out of condescension to popular prejudices, or a regard to the public quiet, which in some cases perhaps may be reasonable ; it ought however to be so distinguished and explained, as to be understood, and treated agreeably to it's nature by men of sense ; not arbitrarily imposed and enforced indifferently upon all, by the fictitious pretence of a divine authority.

For if the studious and inquisitive part of the nation, who search and judge of things for themselves, were made easy on these points, and allowed to think and speak of the popular doctrines of the Church, what they find agreeable to fact and the testimony of their senses, it would be the most effectual means of silencing those uncharitable disputes and dissensions, which are so frequent among us, on subjects generally so trifling, as to be unworthy of the zeal or attention of a Christian, or so subtil and abstruse, as to be incomprehensible to all, and unfit therefore, to be the objects of faith to any. The arbitrary imposition of opinions naturally creates a reluctance to the reception of them ; and as in the collision of bodies, so of minds, the repelling force is equal to that, which impells : but if opi-

nions were proposed to the public, with a latitude of interpretation, which left every one at liberty, to receive them according to his own sense, and to embrace them either as true, or to acquiesce in them as expedient; it would cut off both the pretence, and the inclination to wrangle about them; and we should enjoy them with the same ease, as we do the common air or water, take just as much of them, as we please, without offence or injury to any one else. By this means the virtuous and the liberal would become united in affection, as well as opinion, and live not only with more charity towards each other, but by their example and moderation would lead the multitude also by degrees into more reasonable notions of religious duties; so far at least, as to prevent them from being seduced into any extravagance of zeal and principles, either Popish or Fanatical, which might create danger and disturbance to the peace of the kingdom.

The chief argument, by which the Papists draw our people from us, is the authority of the Catholic Church, supported by a perpetual succession of miracles, wrought in confirmation of those very rites and doctrines, which are now taught and practised at *Rome*. In confutation of which, I have shewn in a former Volume, how that whole system of worship, which we call Popery, and which distinguishes the religion of *Rome*, from that of Protestants, derived it's birth from Paganism, and the corruption of the primitive ages; was grounded on craft and fraud, and has been supported ever since by false and fictitious miracles. All which is so evident, from the clearest testimonies of antiquity, that it could not fail of extirpating Popery at once, out of every country, where it now prevails, if the power and policy of particular States did not find an interest in maintaining, what reason and religion jointly reject.

The

The other evil of Fanatical Enthusiasm, which has once overturned our whole constitution, and is now again at work towards the same end, is grounded chiefly on false notions, infused into weak minds, concerning those extraordinary gifts and illuminations, which were conferred upon the Apostles and first converts to Christianity; and, as these Enthusiasts also affirm, are still indulged in a large measure to themselves. Which extravagance I have endeavoured likewise to correct, in that same Volume, by shewing, that those miraculous gifts of the Gospel, of whatever kind they were, or for whatever purposes given, were peculiar to the circumstances of the Apostolic times, and never afterwards granted to any succeeding age: which same point I shall still farther illustrate, in the present Volume, where I shall explain the nature of those wonderful powers, in their original and most flourishing state; when they were exercised by the Apostles themselves; which appears to be very little understood, or rather very much mistaken by the generality of modern Divines; who, when pressed by the Adversaries of religion with difficulties, which they cannot readily solve, commonly take shelter under the authority of divine Inspiration, and the necessity of an implicit submission to the testimony of God.

But as this way of reasoning cannot be of any force with unbelievers, till the disputants be first agreed, both in their notion of Inspiration, and the certainty also of the fact, *that the Sacred writers were under the constant influence of it*; so to those, who conceive either a different sense of the word, or a different opinion of the thing, it is a mere *begging of the question*, and serves onely to weaken the evidence of our faith. My design therefore in this particular volume is, to correct the mistakes which commonly prevail on this article of Inspiration:

and to inquire how far the Apostles and Evangelists appear to have been favored with it, and to have acted under the immediate direction of an infallible spirit. In the illustration of which, I have not insisted so much on the texts of Scripture, which, by refined and forced constructions, may frequently admit a variety of senses, and leave room for endless wrangling, as on the facts there recorded, which seem decisive and demonstrative of the point, into which I am inquiring.

For instance: no man, who is conversant with the New Testament, has ever scrupled to own, that before our Lord's Ascension, the Apostles, generally speaking, were in the condition of all other men, subject to frailty, error and sin. For we find them sometimes envying and reproving one another; ignorant of their master's purpose; blundering about his words and meaning; and out of fear at last deserting and denying him. Which facts manifestly prove, that during this period of their Apostleship, they were not under the perpetual guidance of the Holy Ghost: tho', in the same interval, they were indued, on certain occasions, with the miraculous power, of *casting out Devils, raising the dead, and curing all diseases.*

After our Lord's Ascension, it is allowed again by all, that they were indued with a larger portion of the same divine gifts; by which their faith was confirmed, their understandings inlightened, their power of working miracles enlarged. But the question still is, how far this larger measure of power reached, and whether to an absolute infallibility and freedom from error: which must be determined by the same rule, by which we formed our judgement on the other period of their ministry; that is, by the facts and instances of their behaviour, delivered to us either by themselves or the other sacred writers. And if under this larger effusion of the Holy Ghost, we find

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the same marks of frailty upon them, as before : if we find them differing from each other in points of fact, and sometimes from themselves in points of doctrine ; quarrelling, dissembling and temporizing, contrary to the truth of the Gospel, we shall be obliged from the same premises to draw the same conclusion, that they were not under the continual direction of an unerring spirit, but left still on ordinary occasions to the condition of ordinary men.

This is what I have particularly set forth in the two following Inquiries by the evidence of facts and instances, which clearly demonstrate it, when stripped of the glosses and forced interpretations, which Commentators had fastened upon them in favor of their several systems and prejudices. And by the same method I have endeavoured also to explain, in a particular Essay, the genuin state of the Gift of tongues, and all the other miraculous gifts, from the original history and effects of them, as they are described in the New Testament : from which it appears, that they were not permanent or lasting, but temporary onely, and adapted to special occasions, and when these were served, suspended presently or withdrawn from the persons, who had been indued with them.

Such was the information, which I received, many years ago, from my inquiries into these subjects : which has appeared ever since so convincing to me, that I have been induced at last, to offer the same to the public ; from a persuasion, that it may be of no small service to prevent, or to shorten at least many of our disputes ; as well by admonishing the Advocates of our religion, not to build their defence of it on a foundation, that will certainly fail them, as by letting it's Adversaries also see, that tho' we grant them the greatest part of what their objections seem to aim at, the *genuin grounds and reasons of Christianity* will yet remain firm and unshaken.

S O M E

SOME
CURSORY REFLECTIONS

ON THE
DISPUTE or DISSENSION,

Which happened at

A N T I O C H,

Between the

APOSTLES PETER and PAUL.

THE history of this dissension between the two Apostles, *St. Peter and St. Paul*, is related by *Paul* himself, in his *Epistle to the Galatians*, in the following Words,

CHAP. II.

- xi. *But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.*
- xii. *For before that certain men came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them, who were of the circumcision.*
- xiii. *And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.*
- xiv. *But when I saw, that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all; if thou being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles, to live as do the Jews? &c.*

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This fact is not mentioned in any other part of the New Testament: for *St. Luke*, who wrote the *Acts of the Apostles*, under the immediate direction of *St. Paul*, and describes the actions of this Apostle more largely than of all the rest, has not given the least hint of it; so that it is difficult to determine the time when it happened. We read indeed of great numbers converted to the faith of Christ at *Antioch*, by the ministry of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and of very high debates subsisting there, between the Jewish and Gentile converts, about the observance of the Mosaic rites [a]. But it is certain, that *Peter* was not concerned in those debates; for *Barnabas*, who was now carried away by his authority into the same dissimulation with him, was, at the time of those other disputes, a strenuous Advocate for Christian liberty, and being sent up with *Paul* to *Jerusalem*, to consult the Apostles and Elders concerning this very question, found *Peter* there, the first and forwardest in that Council, to declare his opinion, which the rest of them followed, *that since an end was now put to the difference between Jew and Gentile, they ought not to tempt God, by imposing that yoke upon the Gentiles, which the Jews themselves had not been able to bear* [b]. And in truth, all that we read concerning *Peter*, except in this single instance related by *Paul*, is intirely consonant to that declaration at *Jerusalem*, and shews him, to have been more eminently convinced than the rest of his brethren, of the utter abolition of the Jewish ceremonies. For this was signified to him by a particular revelation from heaven, in consequence of which, he was the first, who opened the door of faith to the Gentiles, by baptizing *Cornelius* and his family [c]: And in the Council at *Jerusalem*, was the mover of that opinion and Apostolic decree, by which the Gentile converts were set free from the Yoke of *Moses*: Yet notwithstanding all this conviction and zeal for Christian liberty, we find him temporizing still for fear of the Jews, and on that account openly accused of hypocrisy and prevarication by *St. Paul*.

[a] Acts xv. 1, 2.

[b] Ib. v. 7, 8.

[c] Acts x.

It is certain however, that, from the earliest ages of the Church, this story has been a constant topic of raillery to the Sceptics and unbelievers. *Porphyry*, the old enemy of our religion takes occasion from it, "to charge *Paul* with assuming falsely to himself " the merit of facts, which never really happened, in order to " extoll his own character and depress *Peter's*, out of envy to " his more eminent virtues: or allowing the fact to be true, to " accuse *Paul* of insolence and rashness, in reproving his superior " for a compliance, of which he himself was notoriously guilty: " or lastly, to impute to both these great Apostles, a levity, in- " constancy, and weakness of mind, which betrayed them into " a conduct, unworthy of their sacred character [a]."

These objections were thought so dishonorable to Christianity by some of the antient Fathers, that many nice and subtil interpretations were invented to evade the force of them. One of the first, which was applied to this purpose, in those primitive ages, was, the supposition of another person, of the name of *Cephas*, besides the Apostle, one of the seventy Disciples, eminent for his zeal and piety, with whom *Paul* had this dispute. This is mentioned by *Eusebius*, on the authority of *Clemens of Alexandria* [b]: and it is observed by the Critics, that tho' we now find the name of *Peter* in all our present copies of this text, yet many of them, in the first ages, had *Cephas* in the place of it: for nothing could possibly give birth to the hypothesis above mentioned, of a different person from the Apostle, but the name of *Cephas* in that place, which was inserted probably for that very reason, of silencing the cavils of adversaries [c].

But

[a] Locum dari Porphyrio blasphemandi, si aut Petrum errasse, aut Paulum procaciter Apostolorum principem confutasse credatur. Hieron. Comment. in Ep. ad Galat. c. 2.

Ut blasphemantis Porphyrii impudentiam coerceret; qui Paulum & Petrum puerili dicit inter se pugnasse certamine; immo,

exarsisse Paulum in invidiam virtutum Petri; & ea scripsisse jactanter, quæ vel non fecerit, vel si fecerit, procaciter fecerit, id in alio reprehendens, quod ipse commiserit. Hieron.

[b] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 12.

[c] Vid. Millii Edit. Nov. Testam. & not. in loc. N. B. As this reading of the Greek

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But the supposition of another *Cephas*, distinct from the Apostle, of whom there was no mention in the Gospel, nor any authentic account in history, was an argument too precarious to satisfy men of judgement: for which reason we find it disclaimed by some of the primitive Fathers. "We know no other *Cephas*," says *Jerom*, but him, who, in the Gospel and the Epistles, is "sometimes called *Cephas* and sometimes *Peter*: both which names, the one *Greek*, the other *Hebrew* or *Syriac*, are of the same import. And if on the account of *Porphyrus's* blasphemy, and lest *Peter* should be thought to have erred, we must presently feign another *Cephas*, we shall have work enough upon our hands, in expunging numberless places of the holy Scriptures, which he finds fault with, because he does not understand [a]."

St.

Greek text was contrived to clear *Peter's* character from the blame here ascribed to him, so we have another instance, in this same Chapter, of a similar accommodation of the old Latin text, made to clear *Paul's* character also from the charge of inconsistency: by means of which the Greek and Latin Copies exhibited the 5th verse in a sense directly contrary to each other; the Greek, in that, which our English translation follows;

To whom we gave place by subjection, not for an hour.

The Latin, without the negative particle;

To whom we gave away, by yielding to them for a season.

Which last sense is suitable indeed to the place, and what one would naturally expect from the verse preceding, which seems to assign a reason for a temporary compliance of the Apostle: and it is agreeable also to fact and the real history of *St. Paul's* conduct, from which it appears,

that he did actually comply on certain occasions, and yield for a time to the prejudices of the Jews, in order to appease their resentment against him. [*Act.* xvi. 3. xviii. 18. xxi. 26.] So that several of the ancient Fathers preferred this reading and sense of the text: but after this contrariety between the Greek and Latin copies had subsisted through the seven first centuries of the Church, the authority of the Greek at last prevailed, as being more consonant to the general doctrine and tenor of this Epistle.

Itaque aut juxta Græcos Codices est legendum, quibus neque ad horam, aut, si latini exemplaris fides alicui placet,—secundum superiorem sensum accipere debemus, ut ad horam cessio, &c. Hieron. Comment. ad loc.

Rationibus certe istiusmodi ductos puto, qui primi, jam inde ab ipsis Christianismi primordiis, textum hunc corripere, &c. Vid. Millii Edit. & Not. in loc.

[a] Quibus respondendum; alterius, nescio

St. Chrysostom shews likewise, from the circumstances of the fact itself, that it must have been the Apostle Peter, who was concerned in it; because no other person could have had authority enough, to draw the Jews and Barnabas also into his party. [a] Let us inquire then what were the sentiments of these Fathers on this story, and in what manner they interpreted it, so as to elude the calumnies of Porphyry.

Chrysostom, who makes it the subject of a Homily, preached by him in that very City, where it was transacted, takes great pains to shew, " that this seeming quarrel between the two Apostles, was wholly feigned and dissembled, and had been concerted beforehand between them with great art and prudence, for the sake of the converted Jews. For Peter knowing, that he should give much scandal to those, who came from Jerusalem, as being more zealous and stiff in their prejudices than the Provincial Jews, if he should bluntly require them, to quit the whole observance of their ceremonies, and live in common with the Gentiles, chose rather to comply with them for a while, for the sake of insinuating himself the more effectually into their favor and esteem: but that he might draw them and himself too the sooner out of a compliance, which he really condemned, he begged of Paul, to expostulate with him for it very sharply in public, that from his silence and patience under such a reproof, the Jews might infer a tacit acknowledgement of his error, and by observing, that he had nothing to say, in defence of their conduct, might be convinced, that it was not right, and so be induced to change it."

This plot then having had it's effect in Antioch, St. Paul, according to Chrysostom, applies it here again to the benefit of the Galatians, and with the same view, with which he had before been an actor in it, he now gives a relation of it in writing;

nescio cujus, Cephae nescire nos nomen, nisi ejus, qui in Evangelio, & in aliis Pauli Epistolis, & in hac quoque ipsa, modo Cephas, modo Petrus scribitur, &c. Hieron. ib. [a] Homil. Oper. Tom. 3. p. 363. Edit. Benedic.

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“dissembling still the real state of it, that the *Galatians* perceiv-
 “ing how severely *Peter* himself had been reprov’d, for his com-
 “pliance with the ceremonies of the law, might be the more
 “confirmed and resolute in the rejection of them [a].”

Jerom’s opinion of this affair is much the same with *Chrysos-
 tom’s*; “that this quarrel was but a fiction contrived privately be-
 “tween the two Apostles, for the benefit of their new converts.
 “*Peter’s* commission was more particularly directed to the Jews,
 “*Paul’s* to the Gentiles: And though both of them were
 “equally concerned and zealous to promote the common cause
 “of the Gospel, yet each was more specially oblig’d, to secure
 “the salvation of those, who were specially committed to his
 “care. Wherefore, as there were great jealousies and contests
 “between the two factions of the Jewish and Gentile converts,
 “about the observance of the Mosaic rites, so it was concerted
 “by the Apostles, that *Peter*, in order to keep the Jews united
 “to himself and to the faith of Christ, should outwardly declare
 “himself on their side, and pretend a zeal for their principles:
 “and lest the Gentiles on the other hand, should be drawn by
 “his authority to imitate his conduct, *Paul* was to oppose him
 “warmly in public, for the sake of keeping his party likewise
 “intire, and preserving his credit with them; so that, by their
 “mutual dissimulation, both sides might in the end be saved [b].
 “This he illustrates by the example of the Lawyers, who seem
 “often to scold and quarrel with each other, when they mean
 “nothing more, than to deceive the by-standers, and gain the
 “greater credit with their Clients, by an affected zeal for the
 “cause, which they have undertaken to defend [c]. If any one
 “thinks, says he, that *Paul* did really withstand *Peter*, and out

[a] Homil. Oper. Tom. 3. p. 363. Edit. Benedict.

[b] Sed, ut ante diximus, restitit secundum faciem publicam Petro: ut hypocrisis observandæ legis, quæ nocebat eis, qui ex Gentibus crediderant, correptionis hypocrisis emendaretur, & uterque populus

salvus fieret, &c. — Unde & Paulus eadem arte, qua ille simulabat, ei restitit in faciem, &c. Hieron. Comm. in loc.

[c] Ut omissis sæpe negotiis, in proprias contumelias verterentur, & joculari se invicem dente morderent, &c. ibid.

“ of zeal for the truth of the Gospel, did boldly insult his superior, he will not be able to account for *Paul's* conduct, when
“ to the Jews he became a Jew, that he might gain the Jews ;
“ who must be condemned of the same hypocrisy, when he
“ shaved his head at *Cenchrea*, and paid his vow on that occasion
“ in the Temple, and circumcised *Timothy*, the Son of a Gentile,
“ &c. — and with what face could he have the assurance, to condemn that in *Peter*, the Apostle of the Jews, which he himself was guilty of, tho' the Apostle of the Gentiles [a] ?” Such were the sentiments of *St. Jerom*, which he explains at large in his commentary on the Epistle to the *Galatians* : but this solution of the matter was greatly censured by *St. Austin*, and gave occasion to an Epistolary controversy upon it, between these two great Doctors of the primitive Church.

St. Austin charges it “ with being nothing else, but a defence
“ of useful and seasonable lying : and insists, that if *Paul* knew
“ *Peter* to be innocent, at the same time when he declared him
“ to be blameable, and not to act according to the truth of the
“ Gospel, it was in reality a lie : which it is impious, to charge
“ upon an Apostle ; and especially in an Epistle, where he calls
“ God to witness, that he does not lie. He shews also the pernicious consequence of such a doctrine, and that it would destroy the authority of the Scripture itself, by making it impossible to distinguish, between it's real and dissembled meaning :
“ for the prevention of which evil, he exhorts *Jerom* to a recantation. As for his own part, he allows *Peter* to have been
“ blameable, yet not for continuing with his countrymen, to observe the traditions of their Ancestors ; which he might have

[a] Si putat aliquis vere Paulum Petro restitisse, & pro veritate Evangelii intrepide injuriam fecisse Præcessori ; non ei stabit illud, quod & ipse Paulus, Judæis Judæus factus est, ut Judæos lucrifaceret, & ejusdem simulationis tenebitur reus, &c.—

qua auctoritate, qua fronte audet hoc in Petro reprehendere, qui Circumcisionis Apostolus erat, quod ipse, Apostolus Gentium, arguitur commississe. Hieron. Comm. in loc.

“dissembling still the real state of it, that the *Galatians* perceiv-
 “ing how severely *Peter* himself had been reprov’d, for his com-
 “pliance with the ceremonies of the law, might be the more
 “confirmed and resolute in the rejection of them [a].”

Jerom’s opinion of this affair is much the same with *Chrysos-
 tom’s*; “that this quarrel was but a fiction contrived privately be-
 “tween the two Apostles, for the benefit of their new converts.
 “*Peter’s* commission was more particularly directed to the Jews,
 “*Paul’s* to the Gentiles: And though both of them were
 “equally concerned and zealous to promote the common cause
 “of the Gospel, yet each was more specially obliged, to secure
 “the salvation of those, who were specially committed to his
 “care. Wherefore, as there were great jealousies and contests
 “between the two factions of the Jewish and Gentile converts,
 “about the observance of the Mosaic rites, so it was concerted
 “by the Apostles, that *Peter*, in order to keep the Jews united
 “to himself and to the faith of Christ, should outwardly declare
 “himself on their side, and pretend a zeal for their principles:
 “and lest the Gentiles on the other hand, should be drawn by
 “his authority to imitate his conduct, *Paul* was to oppose him
 “warmly in public, for the sake of keeping his party likewise
 “intire, and preserving his credit with them; so that, by their
 “mutual dissimulation, both sides might in the end be saved [b].
 “This he illustrates by the example of the Lawyers, who seem
 “often to scold and quarrel with each other, when they mean
 “nothing more, than to deceive the by-standers, and gain the
 “greater credit with their Clients, by an affected zeal for the
 “cause, which they have undertaken to defend [c]. If any one
 “thinks, says he, that *Paul* did really withstand *Peter*, and out

[a] Homil. Oper. Tom. 3. p. 363. Edit. Benedikt.

[b] Sed, ut ante diximus, restitit secundum faciem publicam Petro: ut hypocrisis observandæ legis, quæ nocebat eis, qui ex Gentibus crediderant, correptionis hypocrisis emendaretur, & uterque populus

salvus fieret, &c. — Unde & Paulus eadem arte, qua ille simulabat, ei restitit in faciem, &c. Hieron. Comm. in loc.

[c] Ut omisissis sæpe negotiis, in proprias contumelias verterentur, & joculari se invicem dente morderent, &c. ibid.

“ of zeal for the truth of the Gospel, did boldly insult his superior, he will not be able to account for *Paul's* conduct, when “ to the Jews he became a Jew, that he might gain the Jews ; “ who must be condemned of the same hypocrisy, when he “ shaved his head at *Cenchrea*, and paid his vow on that occasion “ in the Temple, and circumcised *Timothy*, the Son of a Gentile, “ &c. — and with what face could he have the assurance, to condemn that in *Peter*, the Apostle of the Jews, which he himself was guilty of, tho’ the Apostle of the Gentiles [a] ?” Such were the sentiments of *St. Jerom*, which he explains at large in his commentary on the Epistle to the *Galatians* : but this solution of the matter was greatly censured by *St. Austin*, and gave occasion to an Epistolary controversy upon it, between these two great Doctors of the primitive Church.

St. Austin charges it “ with being nothing else, but a defence “ of useful and seasonable lying : and insists, that if *Paul* knew “ *Peter* to be innocent, at the same time when he declared him “ to be blameable, and not to act according to the truth of the “ Gospel, it was in reality a lie : which it is impious, to charge “ upon an Apostle ; and especially in an Epistle, where he calls “ God to witness, that he does not lie. He shews also the pernicious consequence of such a doctrine, and that it would destroy the authority of the Scripture itself, by making it impossible to distinguish, between it’s real and dissembled meaning : “ for the prevention of which evil, he exhorts *Jerom* to a recantation. As for his own part, he allows *Peter* to have been “ blameable, yet not for continuing with his countrymen, to observe the traditions of their Ancestors ; which he might have

[a] Si putat aliquis vere Paulum Petro restitisse, & pro veritate Evangelii intrepide injuriam fecisse Præcessori ; non ei stabit illud, quod & ipse Paulus, Judæis Judæus factus est, ut Judæos lucrifaceret, & ejusdem simulationis tenebitur reus, &c.—

qua auctoritate, qua fronte audet hoc in Petro reprehendere, qui Circumcisionis Apostolus erat, quod ipse, Apostolus Gentium, arguitur commississe. Hieron. Comm. in loc.

“done both innocently and consistently, but for obliging the
“Gentiles to observe them also in the same manner [a].”

Jerom, on the contrary, persisted in his opinion, which he confirmed by many arguments, as well as the testimonies of all the best Interpreters before him; “challenging *Austin*, to produce
“any one good author of a contrary sentiment; and declaring,
“that it would have been the greatest impudence and audacious-
“ness in *Paul*, to reprove *Peter* so smartly for practices, of which
“he himself was more eminently guilty. And as for *Austin*’s
“opinion, concerning the expediency of observing the rites of
“the Law, he treats it as a mere Heresy, and the same, for
“which *Cerintbus* and *Ebion* had been condemned by the
“Church [b].”

But notwithstanding the great authority of these renowned
Saints *Chrysostom* and *Jerom*, it is certain, that their interpretation
of this story is unnatural and absurd; contrived to support the
vulgar hypothesis, that the Apostles could not err: which they
themselves own to have been the sole end and purpose of it [c].
Austin indeed comes nearer to the truth, in allowing *Peter* to have
been in a fault: yet lest the same should be retorted also on *Paul*,
with the addition of rashness and inconstancy, for condemning in
his fellow-Apostle, what he himself practised afterwards, he
has hit upon an expedient, which lessens the crime of the one,

[a] Patrocinium mendacii susceptum esse, vel a te tali viro, vel a quopiam, si alius ista scripsit; fateor non mediocriter doleo, &c. Epist. August. ad Hieron. Oper. Hieron. T. 4. par. 12. Ep. LXV. p. 602.

Arripe, obsecro te, ingenuam & vere Christianam severitatem & παλινοδία, ut dicitur, cane. Ibid. Ep. LXVII. p. 606.

Quapropter non ideo Petrum emendavit, quod paternas traditiones observaret, quod si facere vellet nec mendaciter nec incongrue faceret — Sed quoniam gentes cogebat Judaizare, &c. ibid.

[b] Quum me erroris mei multos socios habere perspexeris, tu veritatis tuæ saltem unum ad stipulatorem adferre debbis — Hæc est summa sententiæ tuæ, ut post Evangelium Christi benefaciant Judæi credentes, si legis mandata custodiant — si hoc verum est, in Cerinthi & Ebionis hæresim delabimur. Ibid. Ep. 74.

[c] Quod si cui iste non placet sensus, quo nec Petrus peccasse, nec Paulus procaciter arguisse majorem ostenditur. Hieron. in Gal. ii. It. Chrysost. T. 3. p. 363. Edit. Bened.

and clears the other from any share of it, by alledging; that *Peter's* fault did not lie in his compliance with the Jewish rites, but in imposing the same also upon the Gentiles [a]. An interpretation, neither agreeable to the particular sense of that Epistle, nor to the general doctrine of the Apostles; which expressly annuls all the ceremonies of the Law, not onely as useless, but as noxious to all Christians whatsoever, as well of Jewish, as Gentile extraction; and which *Jerom* therefore treats, as nothing better than Heresy.

The modern Commentators, who for the most part do little more than copy the Antients, range themselves here generally on the one side and the other, under *Jerom* and *Austin*. Some indeed take no notice at all of this passage; either finding nothing to say upon it, that pleased them, or fearing perhaps to give offence, by saying what they found to be true. *Erasmus* observes, that it is a very difficult place, and had puzzled the most learned of the Greeks, how to explain it: and as he thought fit on this occasion to adhere to the common hypothesis, that the Apostles, after they had once received the Holy Ghost could not err in points of doctrine; so he follows the explication of *Chrysostom*, and improves still upon it, by straining the words of the text, as some other Critics have also done, so as to make them signify even to the Galatians, that the dispute was wholly feigned and concerted between the two Apostles. For the words, which we rightly translate; *I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed*; they interpret thus; *I withstood him seemingly, or in outward appearance, because he was blamed by some, who did not understand the reason of his conduct* [b]. But they do not reflect, that this forced interpretation is contrary to the whole argument of this Epistle, the purpose of which is, to move the Galatians by his own example, to stand firm in their Christian liberty, against those false

[a] Non quia servabat consuetudinem Judæorum, sed quia Gentibus eam volebat imponere. Aug. Exposit. in Gal. ii. 11.

[b] Certe locus est obscurus, qui doctissimos Græciæ magnopere torlesit. — Sed

Apostolos, post acceptum Spiritum Sanctum, errasse in dogmatibus fidei, mihi videtur dictu impium, &c. Vid. *Erasm.* in Galat. ii. 11, 14. vid. *jt. Clarium.* ib. v. xi.

teachers, who were attempting to impose *the Yoke of Moses* upon them. If in this place therefore, as these interpreters contend, he meant to signify, that, when he withstood *Peter* so warmly, he was acting onely a feigned part, that would destroy the force of his own reasoning.

Grotius, tho' generally speaking the most rational of the Commentators, yet in this passage, seems to have been affected with the popular prejudice, or unwilling at least, out of regard to it, to declare his own sentiments with freedom. For by mitigating the fault of *Peter*, and softening the harshness of *Paul's* censure upon him, he labors to dress up the whole, into the case onely of an amicable debate, or friendly expostulation, about a thing in itself indifferent; which, to say nothing of the rest, the fourteenth verse will by no means bear [a].

On the whole, we may observe; how impossible it is for men even of the greatest learning and piety, to interpret Scripture with success, when they come to it prepossessed with systems, which they are listed as it were to defend, as necessary parts of the Christian religion; for instead of searching candidly for the true meaning of the text, they come provided with senses, which they are obliged to ingraft upon it; till by a practice and habit of wresting the Scripture on all occasions, they acquire a dexterity of extracting what doctrines they please out of it.

The case now before us affords a remarkable instance of it. There is not a fact in all the Scriptures, more clearly, expressly, and intelligibly delivered than this, into which we are inquiring: and if it were found in any other book but the Bible, or told of any other persons, but the Apostles, it would be understood at once, without the possibility of a mistake, by all, even of the lowest capacity. Yet this plain story, related in a book, which above all others, is calculated for the universal instruction and benefit of mankind, has puzzled both the Greeks, and the Latins of all ages, and been strained and tortured by the ablest Doctors

[a] Ἀμικτον, hic intelligendum verbis amicis, &c. Grot. ib. v. xi.

of the Church, for the sake of squeezing out of it every possible sense, but the true one. For which no other cause can be assigned but this; that in the degeneracy of the Primitive Church, when by the policy or superstition of its leaders, new rites and doctrines were introduced, which the text of Scripture disclaimed; then reason and sense were of course discarded, and no rule of interpreting admitted, but what tallied with the fashionable systems, and served the views of those, who introduced them.

I shall procede therefore, without any farther regard to the prejudices and interpretations either of the antients or moderns to set forth the real state of this fact, as it is declared by St. Paul, and illustrated by other passages of the New Testament.

It is manifest then in the first place, that *Peter*, tho' more particularly the Apostle of the Jews, was clearly convinced, that the Ceremonies of the Law were superseded and abolished by the Dispensation of the Gospel. For on all occasions, we find him strongly asserting this doctrine, and declaring, that *the Yoke of Moses* ought not to be imposed on the necks of Christians: yet with all this conviction, it is equally manifest, that through fear of the Jews, he was induced, as we have seen above, to change his conduct, dissemble his opinion, and join himself to those Zealots of the Law, who required the observance of its rites, as necessary still to all [a].

Paul, on the other hand, the Apostle of the Gentiles, and, by that character, the more engaged to vindicate their liberty, knowing *Peter's* sentiments on this question to be really the same with his own, was so scandalised at his dissimulation, that he could not abstain from reproaching him very severely for it in public: yet when it came afterwards to his own turn, to be alarmed with an apprehension of danger from the same quarter, he was content to comply and dissemble too, and in order to pacify the Jews, af-

[a] See Cave's Life of St. Pet. §. viii. c. 7. it. Archbishop Wake on the Epist. of Barnabas, c. x, xi. p. 65.

Timens ergo eos segregabat se a genti-

bus, & simulate illis consentiebat, ad imponenda Gentibus illa onera servitutis. August. in Galat. ii. 11.

fectcd a zeal for their legal rites and observances, by the advice of *James*, who then presided in the Church of *Jerusalem* [a]. *Paul*, says *Chrysostom*, was various both in his words and actions; at one time he complied with the ceremonies of the Law; at another he contemned them: at one time he sacrificed and shaved his head; at another he denounced anathema's against all, who did so: at one time he circumcised, at another rejected all circumcision [b].

We may observe however by the way, that the conduct of *Paul* was not so guarded and cautious as that of *Peter*, who seems to have better understood the true Spirit of his Countrymen, and to what extravagance their enthusiastic zeal would carry them, if provoked and pushed to extremity: he recollected that they had stoned *Stephen*, for declaring, that *Jesus* came to change those customs, which *Moses* had established, and he took care therefore, to give way to them in time, when his compliance was likely to prevent the danger, which he apprehended: whereas *Paul* had carried his zeal for Christian liberty so far, and declared himself every where so roundly against the ceremonies of the law, both by preaching and writing, that when he was driven afterwards to a change of conduct, his dissimulation proved too late, and instead of pacifying the Jews, provoked them onely the more; so that they laid violent hands upon him in the Temple, and would certainly have destroyed him, if the Chief Captain had not come to his rescue with a band of soldiers [c].

This is the true state, of the case, as it may clearly be collected from several passages of the New Testament: and whatever use the enemies of religion can make of it, they must enjoy it, since Christianity cannot be defended, either by denying or concealing the truth. Let the disciples then of *Porphyry*, after the example of their master, object to us if they please, that these two Apostles, of whose extraordinary gifts and miracles we read so much, were left on many occasions, like all other frail and fal-

[a] Acts xxi. 18.

laudib. Pauli. p. 502. Edit. Benedict.

[b] Chrysost. Oper. T. 2. Homil. de

[c] Act. xxi. 31.

liberal men, to govern themselves by rules and maxims merely human, and were betrayed sometimes by their passions, into compliances, dishonourable to their character: for should we grant them all this, it cannot be of any hurt or discredit to Christianity, unless they could shew it to be one of its doctrines, that persons extraordinarily illuminated and inspired on certain occasions, did on all occasions cease to be men: which will not be pretended in a religion, whose sacred monuments, both of the Old and New Testament, furnish many instances of the sins and frailties of those, who are there celebrated, as the principal favorites of heaven.

It may be objected still farther, that, whatever notions we may entertain concerning the inspiration of the sacred writers, it is evident from this very case, that the Apostles and first Preachers were not constantly inspired by the Holy Ghost, even in the execution of their ministry, and the propagation of the Gospel, in one of the principal Cities of the East: and this too must necessarily be granted, since it is demonstrably proved by the fact, into which we are inquiring: for if *Peter's* conduct was really blameable, we must necessarily allow, that he was not at that time under the guidance of an unerring Spirit; or if it was not blameable, then *Paul's* censure of him was rash and unjust, and could not be suggested by the same Spirit.

The same conclusion may be drawn from many other passages of the New Testament; from *Paul's* behaviour before the High Priest, where he was guilty of a rudeness and indecency, which he himself condemns [a]: from his sharp contention with *Barnabas*, who had been joined in commission with him by the Holy Ghost, and was extraordinarily inspired by the same Spirit: which could not have happened, says *Erasmus*, without some fault, on the one side or the other. Their quarrel was about *Mark*, supposed to be the same, who wrote the Gospel; whom *Paul* looked upon as a desertor, and would not keep company with any longer;

[a] Acts xxiii. 5.

but *Barnabas* had a different opinion of him, and chose him for his associate; upon which they parted in anger from each other [a]. *Paul* on this occasion was more severe, says *Jerom*, *Barnabas* more mild; both of them abound in their own sense; yet the quarrel has something in it of human frailty [b].

It appears also, from the account of these disputes in the Church of *Antioch*, that these same Apostles, who planted Christianity in that City, had never made any pretension to an infallible Spirit, nor their converts, who paid the utmost reverence to their persons, had ever entertained a thought of ascribing it to them. For we find, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* had not authority enough with them, to put an end to their contentions about the exercise of the Jewish ceremonies, till they were sent on a formal embassy to *Jerusalem*, to receive the judgement of the whole assembly of the Apostles and Elders residing there, on the subject of their disputes.

As it is certain then, from many testimonies of the New Testament, that the Apostles and first Preachers of the Gospel were indued occasionally with extraordinary powers and supernatural assistances by the Holy Ghost; so it is as certain, from other testimonies, that they were not perpetually assisted in the same extraordinary manner, but frequently left, like common men, to regulate their conduct by their own natural prudence [c].

We

[a] *Act*s xv. 12, 39. Quod fieri non potuit nisi alterutro errante. *Erasm.* in loc. it. in *Matt.* ii. 6.

[b] *Paulus* severior, ille clementior: uterque in suo sensu abundat: tamen dissensio habet aliquid humanæ fragilitatis. *Hieron.* *Oper.* T. 4. par. 2. p. 522.

[c] The case appears to have been the same also under the Jewish Dispensation; that the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, did not perpetually reside in those, to whom they had once been communicated. For example; *Samuel*, when he was sent to anoint a King over *Israel*, out

of the family of *Jesse*, did not know the particular person, to whom his commission was addressed, but, upon the sight of *Jesse's* sons, as they were produced before him, did, what all other men would naturally do; gave the preference in his own mind to him, who by the superior comeliness of his person, seemed the best qualified to sustain the Regal dignity; till he was convinced of his mistake by a special revelation, and directed to *David*, whom God had destined to that honor. [1 *Sam.* xvi. 6.]

Thus

We read sometimes, how the Prophets also of the Old Testament, as well as the Preachers of the New, were indued with a miraculous vigor of body, far above the force of nature; so as to perform great journeys without fatigue, great fastings, without hunger, and support life, without the supply of it's ordinary food; yet at other times, the same men were subject to all the common wants and infirmities of nature; to hunger and thirst; to pain and sickness; to age and decay. The case was the same with the faculties of their minds; whenever God thought fit to make use of their ministry, for the extraordinary purposes of his Providence, he enlarged and enlightened their understandings, and inspired them with a knowledge, incapable of error: yet at other times, left them wholly destitute of any supernatural assistance, and liable to all the effects of their natural passions. It is as extravagant therefore, and contradictory to the testimony of Scripture, to believe the prophets and Apostles to have been at all times incapable of error, because they were sometimes guided by an unerring Spirit; as to imagine, that they were always exempted

Thus also, when *David* had taken a resolution, to build a Temple to the Lord, the Prophet *Nathan*, whom he consulted upon it, approved the project without any hesitation, and encouraged him to execute it. But in that same night, he was ordered by a special revelation from God, to go back to the King, with a command to him, to desist from his design. [*2 Sam. vii. 3. 1 Chron. xxii. 8.*]

Thus again, when the *Shunamite* woman addressed herself, in a passionate manner, to *Elisha*, upon the death of her Son, the Prophet surprized at her distress, declares, that God had hidden the matter from him, and seems anxious, to know the cause of her great affliction. [*2 Kings iv. 27.*] Lastly, from the transaction between the two Prophets, at *Bethel*, it is evident, first,

that their divine Inspiration or Commission was limited to particular purposes, beyond which it had no effect: 2dly, that Prophets, tho' inspired and employed by God on some occasions, yet on others, might be guilty not onely of weak but bad actions. [*1 Kings c. xiii.*] agreeably to which facts, *Grotius* observes, that the Prophetic Spirit was but seldom resident in the Prophets, just as God thought fit; nor were the Prophets certain, at what time they were to have it: of which we see instances, in *Nathan*, *Samuel*, *Isaiab*, [*Acts ii. 3.*] Dr. *Lightfoot* also says, that tho' their power was great, they could neither do nor tell all things, nor act on all occasions, but always had their bounds, and sometimes a recess of the Spirit, or a departure of it from them.

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from

from fatigue, or hunger, because the effect of those sensations was sometimes miraculously suspended in them.

Erasmus, tho' in some places he seems disposed to support the vulgar hypothesis, *that the Apostles could not err*; and like all other Commentators, endeavours, by forced constructions, to adapt the sense of Scripture to that system; yet, in other places, where, like a true Critic, he delivers his sentiments with freedom, he expressly asserts, what I have here advanced; that the Apostles, on ordinary occasions, were not different from ordinary men, but subject to ignorance and error; and from the case of this very diffension between *Paul* and *Peter*, shews, *that they were capable of erring, even after they had received the Holy Ghost* [a]. The learned Mr. *Dodwell* also declares, "that neither the Apostles, nor
" the Prophets even of the first order, were perpetually inspired,
" or had the miraculous gifts of God at their command; and that
" all things therefore, which they have signified to us by their
" words or deeds, are not to be considered as divine Oracles [b].
" There never was a Prophet, says he, except Christ, who, in
" all his actions, was directed by a prophetic Spirit; nor ever
" any, who was not liable to human errors, where he was
" guided onely by his own human Spirit. *Barnabas* erred,
" *St. Peter* also erred, and *St. Paul*, an Apostle not inferior to
" him, affirms him to have erred, tho' they were indued
" with the Apostolic, or the very highest degree of the extra-
" ordinary gifts [c].

[a] *Erasm.* in *Act.* x. 38. Etiam post acceptum Spiritum Sanctum, objurgatur ac docetur Petrus a Paulo: Paulus a Barnaba dissentit usque ad divortium.

[b] Dixeram — ne quidem Apostolis, aut summi ordinis Prophetis fuisse ad nutum aut pro arbitrio suo, divini Numinis afflatus; nec adeo omnia, quæcunque dictis significarunt aut factis, ea pro divinis oraculis habenda. *Pref. in Diss. Iren.* §. ii.

[c] Nullus, excepto Domino, fuit unquam Prophetæ, qui omnia egerit Spiritu prophetico. Nullus, qui in iis, quæ suo gesserit humano spiritui, non fuerit etiam erroribus obnoxius humanis. Erravit Barnabas: Erravit etiam S. Petrus, eumque errasse confirmat, non minor Apostolus, S. Paulus, supremo licet extraordinariorum donorum gradu Apostolico præditi. *Diss. Iren.* 2. §. iii. p. 95.

Some

Some zealots indeed, on the other hand, contend; that to give up the perpetual inspiration of the sacred writers, is to betray the cause of Christianity, and to give up the authority of the Scriptures themselves; and that there is a necessity to admit or reject the whole, as divinely inspired; since partial inspiration will be found equivalent in the end to no inspiration at all. And this indeed is the general doctrine of those, who assume to themselves the title of orthodox: but it is so far from being of service to Christianity, that it has always been, and ever will be, a clog and incumbrance to it, with all rational and thinking men: and to impose it, as necessary to the Creed of a Christian, and on the authority of those sacred books, in which every one may see the apparent marks of human frailty, not onely in the stile and language, but sometimes also in the matter of them, can have no other effect, but of reducing us to the dilemma of distrusting either those books, or our senses.

But this notion is not onely inconsistent with the facts above-mentioned, but contradictory even to those very writers, to whom it is ascribed: for it is certain, that the Evangelists make not the least pretension to it, and the Apostles on some occasions expressly disclame it [a]. *St. Paul*, in this same Epistle to the *Galatians*, says, *I speak after the manner of men*. On which *St. Jerom* observes, "that he makes good what he says, and by his low and vulgar way of reasoning, might have given offence to understanding men, if he had not prefaced it, as he does, by signifying, that he was delivering onely his own human sentiments [b]."

And as this Apostle was sometimes destitute of the divine assistance, in the explication of particular doctrines, so it is as evident also, that, on other occasions, he was deprived of the power of working miracles.

[a] 1 Cor. vii. 12, 25. 2 Cor. xi. 17. Rom. iii. 5. vi. 19.

[b] Gal. iii. 15. Unde manifestum est, id fecisse Apostolum, quod promisit; nec reconditis ad Galatas usum esse sensibus,

sed quotidianis & vilibus, & quæ pos-
sent, nisi præmisisset secundum hominem dico,
prudentibus displicere. Hieron. Comment.
in loc. Oper. T. 4. p. 261.

The Apostles, says *Erasmus*, did not always raise the dead; did not always cure the sick; but then onely, when the cause of religion and of the Gospel required it [a]. *St. Paul* acquaints *Timothy*, that he had left *Trophimus* behind him sick, on his journey towards *Rome*; at a time when he most wanted the comfort and assistance of his friends; being deserted, as he complains, by some of them, and forced to send others to the work of the ministry: and it cannot be supposed, that in such a distress, and want of attendants, he would have left his disciple and companion in that sick state, if he had been indued at that time, as we find him to have been at others, with a miraculous power of healing diseases [b]. In short, this notion of the universal inspiration of the Apostles and sacred Writers, appears to have no other foundation; but in the mistaken sense of certain texts, suggested by the prejudices of pious men, who greedily embrace an hypothesis, which seems to advance the honor of religion, and furnishes, at the same time, the shortest and easiest method of silencing all objections to it, by the infallible authority of persons inspired by God. But this same question will be more clearly and largely illustrated in my next inquiry.

[a] Non semper excitabant mortuos, non semper sanabant ægrotos, sed tum demum, cum ad religionis & Evangelii negotium pertinebat. *Erasm.* in *Act* x. 38.

[b] 2 *Tim.* iv. 20. *Epaphroditus* also, whom *St. Paul* calls his brother and companion in labor, and fellow-soldier, is said to have been dangerously sick, and nigh unto death, to the great grief of the Apostle and

of the *Philippians* also, to whom he sent him with his Epistle, soon after his recovery. [*Philip.* ii. 25.] And in the case likewise of *Timothy*, instead of confirming his health by his miraculous power over all diseases, we find *Paul* advising him onely, to drink a little wine, instead of water, for the sake of his stomach and frequent infirmities. 1 *Tim.* v. 23.

2

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

Variations, or Inconsistencies,

Which are found among the

FOUR EVANGELISTS

In their different Accounts of the same Facts.

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REFLECTIONS, &c.

THE harmony or agreement, which is found in the four Gospels, with regard to the principal transactions there recorded, tho' written by different persons, at different times, and in different places, is justly celebrated by the Christian writers, as a strong proof of the integrity of the Evangelists, and of the certainty of the facts, which they deliver ; and consequently, of the truth of Christianity itself.

It's Adversaries on the other hand, sensible of the force of this reasoning, have been endeavouring in all ages to shake this foundation, by affirming : that there is *no such harmony among the Gospels*, as is pretended, but on the contrary, *such inconsistencies and contradictions*, as are sufficient to blast their authority [a]. But the little success which they have met with in their attempts of this kind, shews, what little weight their objections are thought to have, by the serious and thinking part of mankind.

The Champions however of the Gospel, not content with simple victory, nor satisfied with refuting the cavils of it's enemies, resolved to carry their triumphs still further, and to cut off even the possibility of cavilling for the future, by maintaining, that the Evangelists were not onely consistent in their accounts of all the greater events, but could not possibly contradict each other, even in the smallest, being all of them perpetually inspired by a divine and unerring Spirit.

[a] Quidam vel impia vanitate, vel imperita temeritate calumniis appetunt, ut eis veracis narrationis derogent fidem—hoc enim solent quasi palmare vanitatis sue

obicere, quod ipsi Evangelistæ inter seip-
sos dissentiant. — August. de Consen.
Evangelist. l. 1. §. x.

REFLECTIONS on the Variations;

This opinion obtained in the early ages of the Church, and is asserted by several of the primitive Fathers [a]: in consequence of which, many books have been written, to demonstrate the real harmony of the Gospels, in those very passages, in which they have generally been thought to contradict or dissent from each other.

My present purpose therefore is, to inquire into the state of this question: and to collect, as far as I am able, what it is, that a Christian is bound to believe, on the one side or the other, from the evidence of plain facts, as they are found in the Evangelists themselves: which I shall endeavour to explain, without prejudice or partiality, or any other view, than to discover and declare what is true, and by that means to promote the real interest and honour of religion.

The first objection then, which we meet with to the veracity of the Evangelists, even in the primitive ages, is drawn from the two different *genealogies* of our Saviour's family, as they are severally given by *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke*: which are charged with many inconsistencies, not onely, when compared with each other, but when considered separately and by themselves.

For instance; it is allowed by all the Commentators, both antient and modern, that in the second of those Tesseradecades, or periods of fourteen generations, into which *Matthew* has distributed the whole Genealogy, he has either willfully suppressed, or negligently omitted three successive descents from father to son, between *Joram* and *Ozias*; viz. *Ochozias*, *Joash*, *Abaziah* [b]; in contradiction to the truth of history, and to those very books, whence he drew the Genealogy itself [c]. *Jerom*, *Hilary* and

[a] Solis eis Scripturarum libris, qui jam Canonici appellantur, didici hunc timorem honoremque deferre, ut nullum eorum auctorem scribendo aliquid errasse firmissime credam — Non te arbitror, sic legi tuos libros velle, tanquam Prophetarum & Apostolorum: de quorum scriptis, quod omni errore careant, dubitare nefarium est. Id.

Epist. ad Hieron. in Oper. Hieron. T. 4. par. 2. p. 630. Edit. Benedict.

[b] Cernis ergo, quod secundum fidem historię tres Reges in medio fuerint, quos hic Evangelista pratermisit. Hier. in Matt. 1. Op. T. 4. p. 6.

[c] 4 Reg. iii. 8.

other antient Fathers give this reason for the omission ; that because *Joram* had allied himself to the House of *Abab*, by taking thence his wife *Athalia*, a second *Jesabel* ; *Matthew* did not think his wicked issue, from so wicked a wife, worthy to stand in the pedigree of the *Holy Jesus*, even to the third generation [a].

But this solution is thought ridiculous by some of the best Expositors : for if those three persons had been thrown out of the Genealogy, on the account of their wickedness, the same reason would have excluded several others, as *Achaz*, *Manasses*, &c. “ Let the reader consider, says *Erasmus*, how it can be consistent “ in the Evangelist, to scruple the admission of any for their impiety, when he had given a place to *Ruth*, and to the wife of “ *Uriah*, and to *Rahab*, women famous for their lewdness [b].” And *Jerom* himself, tho’ he assigns the impiety of the three Kings, as the reason of their exclusion, yet observes, “ as a thing, “ to be noted, that no women are numbered in the Genealogy, “ but such, as are mentioned in the Scriptures with some blot “ upon their characters, that he who came for the sake of Sinners, and was himself descended from Sinners, might wipe out the sins of all [c].” Wherefore it is the opinion of *Grotius*, which is intimated likewise by *Jerom*, that *Matthew*’s sole view, in omitting those three persons, was to reduce this division of the Genealogy to the number of fourteen ; with which he has resolved to fill up each of the three periods into which he divided it [d].

[a] Sed in hoc non mendacii aut negligentiae vitium : tres ratione sunt præteriti, &c. Hilar. in Matt. i.

Verum quia *Joram* generi se miscuerat impiissimæ *Jezabel*, idcirco usque ad tertiam generationem memoria ejus tollitur, ne in sanctæ nativitatis ordine poneretur. Hieron. ibid.

[b] Illud expendat diligens lector, qui conveniat hic Evangelistam offensum fuisse quorundam impietate, cum ante *Ruth* posuerit, & uxorem *Uriæ* & *Rahab*, scelere nobiles scæminas. In Matt. i. 17.

[c] Notandum est genealogia Salvatoris, nullam sanctarum assumi mulierum, sed eas, quas Scriptura reprehendit : ut qui propter peccatores venerat, de peccatoribus nascens, omnium peccata deleat. Hieron. in Matt. i.

[d] Quod autem personas quasdam omiserit *Matthæus*, factum est rotundandi numeri causa. Grot. in Matt. i. 17. it. Zenger.

Verum quia Evangelistæ propositum erat, tres Tesseradecadas, in diverso temporum statu ponere, idcirco, &c. Hier. ib. E It

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It is observed however, at the same time, that in his third *Tesseradecade*, or division of the Pedigree, the number of *fourteen* cannot be made out; since all, who are there enumerated, make up *thirteen* onely, including *Jesus* himself. To supply this deficiency, *Theophylact* says, "that the Babylonish captivity, with
" which this third period begins, must be numbered in the place
" of a person." But *Austin* tells us, "that *Jechonias*, who stands
" the last in the second division, must be counted over again at
" the head of the third; being, in that great revolution of the
" Jewish affairs, like a corner-stone, which has two different
" aspects, and belongs to two sides of the building: from which
" he collects a mystical sense, alluding to the person of Christ [a]." But *Jerom* more critically and reasonably supposes, "that there
" stood originally in the pedigree *two Jechonias's*; the Father and
" the Son: the one in the end of the second division; the other,
" in the beginning of the third: and that this identity of name,
" in two persons immediately following each other, gave occasion
" to the omission of one of them, through the inadvertency of
" the Transcribers, in the first ages of the Church; whence the
" same omission was propagated into all the later Copies [b]."

It is observed likewise of this *Jechonias*, who is here said to have begotten *Salathiel*, that he really died childless; without any Successor of his own blood, agreeably to what *Jeremiah* had prophesied concerning him [c]. So that if this *Salathiel*, said to have been begotten of him, be the same, as some think, whom *Luke* calls the *Son of Neri*; then *Jesus's* descent from *David* was not, as *Matthew* deduces it, through *Solomon*, but through *Nathan* and his posterity, as *Luke* derives it [d].

Various conjectures are made by the learned, concerning the reasons, which induced *Matthew* to divide the Genealogy into

[a] Φασὶ τινὲς, ὅτι καὶ τὴν μελαινισίαν, ὡς πρόσωπον τάξιν ἔχουσαν ἔθνηκεν. Theophyl. in Matt. i.

Illud quod in angulo est bis numeratur, in fine scilicet prioris ordinis, & in capite ejus deflexionis, &c. Aug. de Consen.

Evangel. l. 2. §. 10.

[b] Hieron. ibid.

[c] Hieremias, xxii. 30. Lightfoot, in Matt. i. 12.

[d] Grot. in Luc. iii. 27. Lightfoot, ibid.

three equal periods of fourteen generations ; some of them of a deep and mystical sense ; but the most probable is, what *Grotius* has assigned, “ that it was for the sake of assisting the memory ; “ with which view, he first divided the whole into three periods, “ distinguished by as many remarkable Epocha’s ; the first including the time before the Monarchy ; the second, the flourishing state of it ; the third, it’s declension : and then to each “ period he assigned an equal number of names, as those do, “ who artificially help the memory by the means of images disposed in certain places : to effect all which, he made no scruple “ to leave out of the pedigree some persons of inferior note and “ merit [a].”

Dr. Lightfoot tells us, “ that, in *Matthew’s* division of the “ Genealogy, tho’ the facts and numbers do not exactly agree “ with the truth, yet the Jews cannot find fault with him, because it was a common rule and practice with them, to reduce “ both things and numbers, which came near to each other, to “ one and the same denomination ; of which he gives several examples [b].” It is not improbable therefore, that *Matthew*, being a Jew, and writing to the Jews, might use that loose and inaccurate method of computing, which was generally practised in those days by the learned of that nation.

As to the Genealogy given by *Luke*, there is a wonderful confusion in it, as *Erasmus* says, with regard to the names of persons ; which in some copies are too few, in others too many, and in all greatly depraved and inverted. And as in *Matthew’s* Genealogy, several names are omitted and the true pedigree left incomplete ; so in *Luke’s*, many are supposed to have been added by Transcribers, to make it agree with certain traditions, entertained about it : of which sort, as *Grotius* endeavours to shew, are the names of *Matthat*, *Levi* and *Cainan* [c] : So that if the names

[a] Quod ut consequeretur, parvi duxit personarum quasdam minime nobiles transilire. Grot. in Matt. i. 17.

[b] Hor. Hebraic. in Matth. i. 17.

[c] In recensendis nominibus mira con-

fusio— Eras. in Luc. iii. 23.

Ad eum vero numerum res reduci non potest nisi & Matthat, & Levi hoc loco omittantur, ut & infra Cainan. Grot. in Luc. ibid.

omitted by *Matthew* were inserted, and those, which have been added to *Luke*, were thrown out, it seems to be his opinion, as it was also of *Erasmus*, that the numbers in both the Genealogies might be brought to agree very nearly with each other [a].

But if from considering these Genealogies separately, we proceed to compare them with each other, we shall find them clogged with difficulties, which no Expositors, either antient or modern, have been able to solve. For tho' both of them deduce the family of *Jesus* in a direct line from *David*, yet this line is filled up by a succession of different persons in each; so that through the whole descent we find but two names the same in the two pedigrees; and tho' in *Matthew's* deduction of it, the period from *David* to *Jesus* contains but *twenty eight* generations, in *Luke's*, it contains *forty one*.

I have already intimated, how some have accounted for the different number of names in each pedigree: but that solution will not answer the purpose, or bring them near to a parity, because all, which appear to have been omitted by *Matthew*, are but *four*, and all which are supposed to have been added to *Luke*, but three. As to the difference of the persons themselves, some Commentators labor to shew, that the same persons are really enumerated by both the Evangelists, tho' under different names; it being the custom of the Jews, for each man to have several: but since all the names are exactly the same in them both, from *Abraham* to *David*, yet differ almost totally from *David* to *Jesus*, this account of the matter, as *Grotius* rightly observes, cannot be thought reasonable by men of Judgement; nor so wide a difference ascribed to the accidental effect of such a custom [b].

Another expedient therefore has been invented and espoused by some Critics of great name [c]: viz. that *Matthew* gives us the pedigree of *Joseph*, the reputed Father, and *Luke*, of *Mary* the

[a] Quos si ceteris adjeceris comperies & numerum consentire. *Erasmi*. Ibid.

[b] Ex sola τῆς πολυωνομίας causa accidisse, non facile concedet, qui judicio

valet. *Grot.* in *Luc.* iii. 23.

[c] *Erasmus*, *Drusius*, *Toinard*, *Spanheim*, *Vossius*, *Jansenius*, *Chemnitius*, *Lightfoot*, &c.

Mother of *Jesus* : and tho' *Joseph* be called by *Luke* the Son of *Heli*, he must be understood to mean the Son in law, as being the husband of his daughter *Mary*. But this opinion, tho' approved by many of the learned, is justly rejected by others, as being wholly grounded on an Hypothesis, without any solid reason to support it [a] : For *Luke*, without any mention of *Mary*, proceeds directly and expressly to set forth the genealogy of *Joseph* : " nor was it ever customary or known among the Jews, to deduce the descent of families through the female line [b]."

It is objected likewise, that tho' both the Evangelists profess to set forth the true family and pedigree of *Jesus*, yet neither of them have really exhibited it, but have given us onely the descent of *Joseph*, his reputed Father, of whose blood he had no share or participation. To this it is answered ; " that the family of *Mary* the real mother of *Jesus*, is included and represented in that of her husband ; because every man was obliged " by the law of *Moses*, to take his wife out of his own tribe [c]."

But this likewise does not satisfy ; because the rule of marrying within the same tribe was not constantly observed ; or if it had been so, would not prove *Mary* to have been of the same family ; which is a quite different case [d]. The Commentators therefore have been driven to another shift ; to suppose *Mary* to have been an Heiress, and for that reason obliged to marry her nearest of kin [e]. But this is supposed again without any foundation : for it does not appear, that there was any other obligation, even upon Heiresses, than to marry onely within their own tribe : nor is it

[a] Quod quidam existimant, a Matthæo recenseri genus Josephi, a Luca autem Mariæ, nequaquam mihi probabile videtur. Grot. in Matth. i. 16.

[b] —ὅτι ἦν νόμος παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις γενεαλογεῖσθαι γυναῖκας. Theophyl. in Matth. i. it. Chrysost. Hom. 2.

Non esse consuetudinis Scripturarum, ut mulierum in generationibus ordo texatur. Hier. in Matt. i.

[c] Nam ita fit, ut in persona Josephi, etiam Mariæ genus comprehendatur, &c. Casaub. in Luc. iii. 23.

[d] Quod aiunt tribules tribulibus numerare debuisse, neque perpetuum est ; neque si sit, eo usque valere potest, ut etiam ex Davidis familia Mariam fuisse, inde appareat. Grot. Matt. i. 16.

[e] Numb. xxxvi. 6.

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at all probable, that *Mary* was an Heiress, since all the facts, which are delivered of Her plainly tend to prove the contrary.

It seems very evident, that the Evangelists had no other notion of our Lord's descent from *David*, than through *Joseph*, whose son he legally was: for whenever they mention *Joseph*, they generally stile him the *Son of David*, or of *the house of David*; yet never ascribe the same character to *Mary*: who, from the silence of the sacred writers, as well as from her relation to *Elizabeth*, of the family of *Aaron* [a], is thought most probably to have been of a different tribe, from that of her husband.

The opinion then, which seems to be the most generally received at this day, is; that both the Evangelists exhibit the pedigree of *Joseph* onely, but that *Matthew* gives the succession of his natural, *Luke* of his legal parentage. To illustrate this, they suppose, that *Heli* and *Jacob*, each of whom, in the several Genealogies, is called *the Father of Joseph*, were brothers; not by the same Father, but by the Mother onely; and *Heli*, the elder, being married and dying without issue, *Jacob* took his wife, according to the law, to raise up seed to his brother, and so begat *Joseph*; by nature and blood *the Son of Jacob*; by the law and right of succession, the son also of *Heli*; who descended in a direct line from *Nathan*, the Son of *David*, as *Jacob* did from *Solomon*. This account is taken from *Eusebius*, who tells us; that *Epiphanius* pretended to have received it from our Saviour's own family [b]. But *Epiphanius*'s authority is much suspected; and the account itself charged with great difficulties, and even absurdities by the Critics [c]: and *Grotius* particularly, tho' he allows the distinction of the legal and natural descent of *Joseph* to be the most plausible solution of the disagreement of the two Genealogies, yet, contrary to all the other interpreters, he assigns the deduction of the legal stemm to *Matthew*; and of the na-

[a] Matth. i. 29. Luc. i. 27: ii. 4. it. i. 5, 36.

[b] Euseb. Hist. Ecc. l. i. c. 7.

[c] Sed eum Scriptorem in multis rebus

non tam diligentia, quam judicio & linguarum cognitione destitutum, labi, probatu proclive est. Grot. in Luc. iii. 23.

tural,

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Africanus

tural, to *Luke*: which tho' he confirms by many probable, and, as he himself thinks, unanswerable arguments, yet his opinion has had no better fate, than the rest above mentioned, of being refuted and rejected in it's turn, by all the other Commentators [a].

Upon the whole, since men of the greatest learning and experience in these studies, have not been able to produce any thing satisfactory on the subject of these Genealogies, but have constantly exploded each other's notions, so that what one had established as a foundation, was presently overthrown by another, there seems to be no other part left to us, than, with many of the same Critics, to consider the two pedigrees, as inexplicable and irreconcilable, and according to the advice of *St. Paul*, to give no heed to endless genealogies, which *minister questions, rather than godly edifying, which is in faith* [b].

As to the historical facts, which are recorded in the Gospels, Interpreters have observed likewise a strange disagreement and variation in many of them, as they are severally described by different Evangelists. For example; the story of the woman who anointed our Lord, is thus told by *Matthew* and *Mark*, *that Jesus being at Bethany, in the house of Simon the Leper, there came in a woman having an Alabaster box of rich ointment and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. St. John*, without any mention of *Simon the Leper*, says, *that this passed at a Supper made for Jesus, in Bethany, where Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead, sat at the table with him, whose Sister Martha waited on them, while his other Sister Mary*

[a] Ego vero non conjecturis, sed liquidis, ni fallor, rationibus adductus certissimum arbitror, a Matthæo spectari juris successionem. Ibid.

[b] Cum hæcenus tam multi & docti & exercitati viri ita digladiati sint, ut quæ alius tanquam solidissima fundamenta posuerat, alius novis rationibus illa destruat, &c. Vid. Clarium. in Matt. i. 1.

Illud interim cavebimus, ne post alios

etiam ex veteribus, qui naufragium non semel hic fecerunt, Genealogiam anxie excutiamus: contenti illo Ambrosii in Lucam, non licet mihi scire generationis feriem, non licet tamen nescire generationis fidem. Heinf. Exercit. Sacr. in Matt. i.

Operam & oleum perdit, qui hic curiose & superstitiose diligenz, &c. Scultet. Exercit. Evangel. l. 1. 42. See Hammond. on Matt. i.

took a pound of ointment of Spikenard very costly, and anointed with it, not the head, but the feet of Jesus, and wiped them with her hair. Matthew says, that when his Disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying; to what purpose is this wast? for this ointment might have been sold for much and given to the poor—Mark also tells us, that there were some, who had indignation at this wast, and were very angry with the woman for it. But John says, that it was onely Judas Iscariot, who grumbled at it—not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag and bare what was put therein [a].

This story of the unction of Jesus, by a certain woman, who had been a Sinner, as it is related by Luke [b], supplies so many fresh difficulties, that the Expositors both antient and modern have been driven to their usual shift, of supposing these different accounts to relate to different facts performed at different times, and by different women. Let no man imagine, says Jerom, that it was the same woman, who anointed the head, and the feet of Jesus. Where the Editor of his works admonishes us by a marginal note, that there were many Mary's, who anointed him [c]. Theophylact supposes, that there were three; but Austin, that the same thing was performed twice by the same woman [d]. Yet all these varying accounts agree so remarkably with each other in every principal circumstance, that it is absurd and irrational, to feign several distinct stories, to serve the prejudices onely of those, who think it impious, to allow the possibility of an error or mistake in the Evangelists. For Luke affirms with John, that

[a] Matt. xxvi. 6. Mar. xiv. 3. Joh. xii. 1.

Scio quosdam hunc locum calumniari, quare alius Evangelista Judam solum dixerit contristatum, & Matthæus scribat omnes Apostolos contristatos; nescientes tropum, qui dicitur σύλληψις, vel Synecdoche—Hier. in Matt. xxvi. Op. T. 4. p. 125.

[b] Luk. vii. 37.

[c] Nemo putet eandem esse quæ unguentum fudit super caput & quæ super pedes, &c. Id. ibid.

[d] Τινὲς τρεῖς λέγουσι εἶναι, &c. Theophyl. in Matt. xxvi.

Nihil itaque aliud intelligendum, nisi non quidem aliam fuisse mulierem—sed eandem Mariam bis hoc fecisse—August. de Conf. Evang. l. 2. §. 154.

this passed at an entertainment made for *Jesus*; and with the other Two, in the house of a person called *Simon*; and in the words of *Mark*, that the woman brought an *Alabaster box of ointment*; and again, with *John*, that she anointed, not the head, but the feet of *Jesus* [a]. But what seems to put the case beyond all doubt, is; that *John*, speaking in another place of this *Mary*, the sister of *Lazarus*, before his mention of this fact, says of her, by an anticipation or *prolepsis*, not unusual with the sacred writers, *She who anointed the Lord, with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair*: which designation of her person, by so particular a circumstance would have been impertinent and equivocal, as *Grotius* observes, if there had been more facts of the same kind, and more *Mary's*, who anointed him [b].

There is a great difference also in the time, which is assigned to this unction by the Evangelists, whence the chief argument is drawn for the diversity of the fact: for three of them declare it to have happened a few days before the death of *Jesus*; whereas *Luke* describes it, as done in the beginning of his ministry, and while *John Baptist* was living. But this will easily be accounted for, by alledging what the most scrupulous of the Commentators allow, that the *Evangelists* took no care, nor thought, to dispose their facts in the proper order of time, in which they were transacted, but set them down, just as their memory supplied them; and what they had forgotten in it's proper place, related in another, as they happened to recollect it; and that *Luke* in particular was less accurate in this article than any of them, as he compiled his history, not from his own knowledge or experience, but from materials received at second hand from others. Wherefore since in the case of this same story, as it is separately related by three of the *Evangelists*, we confessedly see several variations or seem-

[a] Non tantum unam eandemque fuisse mulierem, sed & factum idem, cur negetur non video: neque enim temere multiplicandæ historiæ.—Hæ circumstantiæ sunt *ἀντιστοιχίαι* quam ut diversis tem-

poribus congruant. Grot. in Matt. xxvi. 6.

[b] Non poterat autem certa satis nota sumi ex eo, quod sæpius acciderat, &c. Grot. ibid.

ing inconsistencies; what scruple or danger can there be, in admitting a few more, from the relation of a fourth, who, in his account of facts, which are common to them all, is observed, for the reason just mentioned, to be more confused and inaccurate than any of them [a].

After the story just mentioned, there follows another in the same chapter, of our Lord's foretelling to his Disciples the treachery of *Judas*, which is related also variously by the Evangelists. For his Apostles, as they sat at table with him, being grieved to hear him declare, that one of their number should prove so vile a traitor, were very desirous, for their own justification, that the person might be named, and *began every one to say, Lord is it I?* Whereupon *Jesus* gave them a sign or token, by which they might distinguish him, saying; *He, who dippeth his band with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.* This account is given by *Matthew* and *Mark*; but *John* gives a very different turn to it: *that Peter beckened to John, who was leaning on Jesus's bosom, to ask, who it should be: and John having put the question, Jesus answered; He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it: and when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas [b].*

The difference is of no consequence, and might safely be imputed to want of accuracy or memory, in recollecting and recording minute circumstances: but such an imputation is generally thought so dishonorable to the Evangelists, that it is pleasant to see, what shifts have been contrived to evade it. We are told

[a] Nihil certius, quam a Scriptoribus Evangeliorum multa referri, non temporis ordine sed rerum ductu. Grot. in Matt. xxvi. 6.

Matthæus non ordine quo gestum est, sed quo prætermissum recolit, &c. August. de Conf. Evang. l. 2. §. 53.

Marcus ea juxta fidem magis gestorum narravit, quam ordinem. Hieron. Prol. in Matt.

None of them agree throughout in ob-

serving the order and succession of the actions related, &c. Hammond Prol. in Matt. p. 4.

Luke who wrote his story from collections he had from others, hath not so exactly observed the order, and hath varied from the others in words and circumstances, &c. *ibid.*

[b] Matt. xxvi. 23. Mar. xiv. 20. Joh. xiii. 26.

then,

then, that this designation of the traitor *Judas*, by the delivery of a *sep* to him, was not signified by *Jesus* in common to all his Apostles, but to *John* onely in private, then lying upon his bosom; who had *whispered the question* to his Master, and was answered also by a *whisper*, which was not explained to the rest; who knew therefore nothing more of the matter, than what is recorded by *Matthew* and *Mark* [a]. So blind is prejudice, that to refute the suspicion of an error or slip of memory in the Evangelists, it does not scruple to charge them with ignorance of the facts, which they had undertaken to transmit to posterity.

Matthew relates, that two *Dæmoniacs*, who lived furious among the tombs, in the country of the *Gadarenes*, were cured by *Jesus*, when he permitted the ejected Devils to enter into the herd of swine: but *Mark* and *Luke* tell the same story of one man onely, possessed by a legion of Devils [b]. *Austin*, accounting for this difference, says; "that we are to understand, that one of the two *Dæmoniacs* mentioned by *Matthew* was of a more distinguished and eminent character; for whose unhappy case that country was chiefly concerned, and more particularly solicitous for his safety: so that the other two Evangelists, being desirous to signify this, thought it best to mention him alone, by whose means the fame of this miracle had been more widely and effectually spread [c].

Matthew informs us also, that two blind men implored the help of *Jesus*, as he was passing along the road, and were cured by him of their blindness: but *Mark* tells the same fact of one man onely so cured, whose name he particularly mentions, *Bartimeus the son of Timæus*: they both however declare the case to have

[a] Nulli discipulorum aperte demonstravit, quis illum traditurus esset, præterquam Johanni, cui secrete percunctanti secrete responsum puto. — Zeger. in Matt. xxvii. 23.

Cum Johannes submissiori voce interrogaret, Christus submissa itidem voce indicavit—quod cum non intellexissent reliqui

Apostoli, &c. Lud. Cappell. in Joh. xiii. 26.

[b] Matt. viii. 28. Mar. v. 2. Luc. viii. 26.

[c] Intelligas unum eorum fuisse personæ alicujus clarioris & famosiore, quem regio illa maxime dolebat, & pro ejus salute plurimum satagebat, &c. de Conf. Evang. l. 2. §. 56.

happened, as *Jesus* returned from *Jericho*: but *Luke*, who agrees with *Mark*, in mentioning but *one blind man*, contradicts them both, in affirming the miracle to have been wrought, as *Jesus was going towards Jericho* [a]. *Origen* remarks on this passage; “that if we believe the Evangelists to have written their Gospels under the direction of the Holy Ghost, we must believe at the same time, that three distinct stories are here recorded; since circumstances so contradictory cannot be true of one and the same. Yet those, says he, who search deeper into the sense of Scripture, will find, that it is but one and the same transaction, delivered in different words by them all [b].”

St. Austin thinks it a sufficient solution of the difficulty, to suppose the same miracle to have been twice performed, on *two several blind men*; on the one, as *Jesus went*, and on the other, as *he returned from Jericho* [c]. And he gives the same reason again, as in the former case, why *Mark* has chosen to speak onely of one of them; “because his story was more known and famous in that City: as it is evident, he says, from the mention of the name of the man and of his Father also: whom he supposes to have been reduced from some flourishing state of life, to this miserable condition of blindness and beggary: whose cure therefore made the miracle as notorious as his calamity [d].” But it is surely more reasonable to say here, what I find to have been said, by a strenuous advocate of the Gospel, that these several accounts of the Evangelists are different indeed, but not contradictory: and that *Matthew was more accurate in this instance, than either Mark or Luke* [e]; as in the next, we shall find *Luke*, in his turn, more exact than the other two.

[a] Matt. xx. 30. Mar. x. 46. Luc. xviii. 35.

[b] Orig. Comm. in Matt. Edit. Huet. T. 1. p. 427.

[c] Nihil aliud restat intelligere, nisi bis esse factum hoc miraculum, &c. August.

Quæstion. Evang. l. 2. Quæst. XLVIII. 1.

[d] De Conf. Evang. l. 2. §. 125.

[e] At hæc non contraria, sed tantum diversa — & a Matthæo, accuratius quam a Luca, historia describitur. — Cuper. arcana Atheism, revelat. l. 2. p. 169.

The story of *the two Thieves*, who were crucified together with *Jesus*, is related also in the several Gospels with a very remarkable difference. *Matthew* and *Mark* tell us onely in short, that *both the Thieves*, as they were hanging with him on the Cross, *insulted and reviled Jesus*: whereas *Luke* more particularly declares, that it was but *one of them*, who reviled him, while the other acted a contrary part, and, having rebuked his fellow-sufferer for his insolence, said unto *Jesus*, *Lord remember me, when thou comest into thy Kingdom* [a].

The Critics again, both antient and modern, take great pains to elude the charge of a contradiction: but none have been so hardy, as *Cardinal Hugo*, who, as he is cited by *Erasmus*, treats this passage in *Matthew*, as little better than *a lie*; or *such an account, as one would expect from a man in his cups* [b]. *St. Chrysostom* and *Jerom*, and all the Antients, allow a seeming contradiction in the words, but attempt to clear the Evangelists of it, by supposing, "that both the Thieves blasphemed *Jesus* at first, till "one of them, convinced by the prodigies, which then happened, "of the Sun darkened and the earth trembling, quickly changed "his note, and, from a sudden conversion and repentance, implored his mercy [c]." Which solution, tho' embraced, according to custom, by many of the moderns, is justly rejected by others, as a groundless and fictitious comment [d]. For what contradiction, how gross soever, might not easily be solved and eluded, if such a method of interpreting were allowed, which, without any authority from history, indulged a liberty of inventing

[a] Matt. xxvii. 44. Mar. xv. 32. Luc. xxiii. 39.

[b] Hoc, inquit, videtur falsum — ac mox, Hoc, inquit, dicitur, ut putes dictum inter pocula. *Erasm.* in Matt. xxvii. 44.

[c] Non quod discrepent Evangelia, sed quod primum uterque blasphemaverit, dehinc sole fugiente, terra commota, — unus crediderit in *Jesum*, & priorem negationem sequenti confessione emendave-

rit. — *Hier. Comm.* in Matt. xxvii. it. *Chrysost. Hom.* in Paralyt. T. 3. p. 30. *Edit. Bened. it. Theophyl.* in Matt. xxvii. it. *Zeger*, in Matt. *ibid.* & *Hammond*, *ibid.*

[d] Hæc congeffi, nequis cum antiquis aliquot ad eam interpretationem confugiat, quæ parum probabiliter statuit, Latronem, qui in *Christo* credidit, subito a convitiis ad eam pietatem conversum: quo commento sublato, &c. *Grot.* in Matt. xxvii. 44.

and supplying every imaginable circumstance, which the fact could possibly admit.

The solution therefore, which is now generally received, is this; that the Evangelists have used onely *the plural*, instead of *the singular* number, and by a common use of language, have spoken indefinitely or generally, on a single or particular case; which they illustrate by other examples from the sacred Writers, Yet this, if allowed even to be true, cannot be applicable to the case before us: for when *Matthew* says, that *the Thieves*, and *Mark*, that *they also*, who were crucified with him reviled him: if nothing more had been said by *Luke*, than that this was done onely by one of them; the difference might possibly have been reconciled: but when *Luke* expressly tells us, that of *the two Thieves* crucified, the one railed on *Jesus*, and the other on the contrary, by a surprizing conversion, confessed his faith in him, and implored his mercy, the difference is too precise and glaring to be smoothed over by the use of a trope or figure, which some call an *Enallage*, others a *Syllepsis* [a].

What other method then is there left of accounting for this contrariety, but that, which the case itself naturally offers to us; that *Luke* had his account probably from some, who had observed more exactly every circumstance of the Crucifixion, or, by standing nearer to the Cross, had heard more distinctly all, which was said by those, who were crucified? For it is highly improbable, or impossible rather, to imagine, that the other *Evangelists* would have omitted to mention a fact of such moment, and one of the most remarkable in the New Testament, if it had come to their knowledge: a fact, I say, so full both of instruction and of comfort to all Christians, both good and bad; which decides the grand quæstion about the immediate state of departed souls, and the entrance of the just into Paradise: since it is absurd to imagine, that this Thief, after a life wholly spent in riot

[a] Sed etiam quia unus hoc fecit, potuit usitato locutionis modo per pluralem numerum significari. — August. de Conf.

Evang. l. 3. §. 53. See Grot. Eram. and the other Critics on this text.

and wickedness, should by a sudden repentance, how signal or sincere soever, obtain any peculiar reward, beyond what is prepared for the faithful and the righteous [a]. St. *Cbrysoſtom* speaking of this very case in one of his Sermons, says; "Christ introduced the Thief into Paradise, loaded with an infinite weight of sins. But was this then the sole wonder in the case, that he introduced a Thief into Paradise? No, there is another still greater. For he introduced him preferably to all the world, and to his own Apostles; that no man hereafter might despair of an admission, or lose all hopes of his own Salvation, tho' he be spending his life in the Courts of Kings, and charged with all the vices, which there abound [b]."

We find likewise an irreconcilable difference, or contradiction, between *Mark* and *John*, concerning the time of the day, when *Jesus* was crucified. *Mark* says expressly, that it was but *the third hour, or nine of the clock in the morning*, when they had actually fixed him on the Cross: *John* says, that it was about *the sixth hour, or twelve of the clock*, while he was yet under examination before *Pilate* [c].

[a] Mihi quidem tale hoc miraculum videtur, ut illustrius majusque nullum alibi exstare existimem: nullum quod afflictos peccatorum mole animos magis attollat. — Heinf. Exercit. Sac. in Luc. xxiii.

[b] Oper. T. 4. p. 679. C. Edit. Benedict.

N. B. St. *Austin*, having affirmed in a certain treatise, that Baptism was absolutely necessary to salvation, and being urged with the case of this Thief, as a confutation of his opinion, makes answer; "that the Thief was reckoned by that holy Bishop St. *Cyprian*, in the number of those Martyrs, who were baptized by their own blood: which was the case of many, in the times of persecution, who had not the opportunity of a re-

gular baptism. That it was believed also and not improbably, that, as he hung so near on the Cross, he might be sprinkled with some of that water, which issued together with blood, from the wound in *Jesus's* side, and so was washed by that most holy baptism: and farther, that no body could certainly know, whether he had not been regularly baptized either in his prison or before he was taken." [De origin. Anim. l. 1. c. 9. l. 3. c. 9.] Which shews, how one groundless hypothesis, obstinately maintained, necessarily creates many more of the same kind, and intangles us of course in a perpetual labyrinth of error and absurdity.

[c] Mar. xv. 25. John xix. 14.

Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, who lived in the third century, declares, that in both those Gospels the third hour was written, as it might be seen in the very original exemplar of *St. John's Gospel*, which was preserved to his time in the Church of Ephesus. But this is looked upon by the generality of the Critics, as an undoubted forgery, either of *Bishop Peter*, or some Transcriber of his works, contrived for the sake of reconciling the two Evangelists [a].

St. Jerom, who lived about a century later, tells us just the contrary. "That the sixth hour was written originally in both the Gospels; but that the Transcribers instead of writing the word at length, put for it the mark, ς, which commonly signified the number six; but was mistaken by other Transcribers for the letter, Γ, the numeral mark for three; whence the same mistake was propagated into all the later Copies [b]." But this solution is clogged likewise with insuperable difficulties, and rejected therefore by the Critics; who find, that such abbreviations, or numeral marks were not commonly used in those early ages [c]; since none of them are to be met with in the oldest of those manuscripts which still remain: nor is it possible, that the accidental mistake of one or two Transcribers could be transferred universally into all the later Copies.

St. Austin gives us a third solution, much more subtil and refined, "that *Mark*, who says, they crucified him at the third hour, is not to be understood to denote the time of his being

[a] Vid. Millii Not. in loc. it. Grot.

But of what authority that relation is, may yet be questioned: and the antient *Alexandrian* Copy accords in the main with the printed Copies.—And it is more probable, that the reading, τρίτη, the third hour in *Mark*, should move some transcribers to read τρίτη too in *John*, to take away the seeming difference, and to accord the Evangelists, than for any one to turn τρίτη into ἕκτῃ, contrary to what was before in *Mark*, if they had found it

otherwise. Hammond on Joh. xix. 14.

[b] Hoc videtur esse diversum sed non est diversum: error Scriptorum fuit: & in Marco hora sexta scriptam fuit: sed multi episcopus græcum ς putaverunt esse Γ, &c. Hieron. in Psalm. lxxvii. it. Theophylact. in Joh. xix. 14.

[c] Neque vero per notas scriptos fuisse numeros in primogenis Codicibus, ullo argumento constat. Grot. in Mar. xv. 25. Zeger. ib. it. Millii Not.

" nailed

"nailed to the Cross, but of that clamor, which was made against him by the Jews, while he was still before Pilate, when they cried out, *crucify him, crucify him*, designing to insinuate thereby, that the Jews, who made that outcry for his Crucifixion, were more properly the authors of it, than those ministers, who afterwards executed the command of their superiors: and that he was more truly crucified at *the third hour*, by the tongues of the Jews, than at *the sixth*, by the hands of the Soldiers. If you do not like my explication, says he, shew me, how it is possible to solve the contradiction: shew, how Jesus could be crucified both at *the third* and *the sixth hour* [a]."

The modern Expositors therefore rejecting all the solutions just mentioned, have hit upon another, somewhat more plausible, in which they generally follow each other; viz. "that the day among the Jews, beginning from six in the morning, was divided into four equal portions of three hours each; called *the third, the sixth, the ninth, and the twelfth hours*: the three first of which were the stated hours of public prayer in the Temple, and proclaimed to the people by the sound of a trumpet. As *the third hour* then was supposed to continue till the next sounding of the Trumpet, at *the sixth hour*, so whatever was transacted within that interval, how near soever to the beginning of the next division, was said, in the common way of speech, to happen in *the third hour* [b]." But tho' this would bring the Evangelists nearer to each other, yet it will not reconcile them; since *Mark* expressly affirms, that *Jesus* was actually crucified before that hour, in which *John* says as expressly, that *Pilate* was still sitting in judgement upon him. Nor is the notion itself true, that such a gross division of the day was in use among the Jews, as may be shewn from many passages of the

[a] Occulte ostendere voluit, eos magis crucifixisse Jesum, qui clamaverunt, ut crucifigeretur, quam illos, qui ministerium Principi præstiterunt, &c. — August. de

Conf. Evan. l. 3. §. 42.

[b] Vid. Grot. in Matt. xxvii. 45. Zeger. in Mar. xv. 25. Hammond on Joh. xix. 14.

New Testament: for tho' *the third, sixth and ninth hours*, as being the solemn *hours* of religious worship, were more remarkable than the rest, and for that reason are more frequently mentioned by the sacred writers, yet we find, that their day, like to that of the *Babylonians*, from whom they probably learnt the division of it, as the Greeks also did, was divided into *twelve hours* [a]. *Are there not twelve hours of the day?* says our Lord: and in other places, mention is made of *the seventh, tenth, and the eleventh hour*, &c. [b] So that on the whole, we must be forced at last, with several of the Critics, to leave the difficulty, just as we found it, chargeable with all the consequences of a manifest inconsistency [c].

The occurrences also, which passed at our Lord's sepulcher, immediately after his resurrection, are described so variously by different Evangelists, that the learned have been strangely puzzled to reconcile them, and some obliged to give them up as contradictory [d]. *Jerom*, in his answer to a question, which was put to him, how *Mark's account could be reconciled with Matthew's*, says; "that *Mark's* testimony might be rejected here as spurious, "because it was found onely in a few copies of the Gospels, and "scarce in any of the Greek, and especially, as it seemed to relate things contrary to the other Evangelists [e]." The same is confirmed also by other primitive writers, who tell us, that *the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel* were not to be found in many Copies of those early ages. Yet after a most diligent scru-

[a] Τα δώδεκα μέρη τῆς ἡμέρας παρὰ Βαβυλωνίων ἔμαθεν Ἕλληνας. Herodot. l. 2. p. 129. Ed. Lond.

[b] John xi. 9. iv. 52. i. 40. Matt. xx. 26.

[c] Ego ampliandum censeo. Nam & illi & hi non satis probarunt mihi dicta sua. Nihil dicit, qui non probat quod dicit. Ego experientia didici, sæpe deceptos esse qui nimium crediderunt viris doctis, etiam Theologis, aliquid asserentibus sine fide, sine teste. Drusus. in Mar. xv. 25.

[d] Alia non pauca hoc loco sunt, quæ non facile quis ex Evangelistarum collatione docere posset non esse pugnantia. Zenger. in Marc. xvi. 5.

[e] Aut enim non recipimus Marci testimonium, quod in raris fertur Evangelis, omnibus Græciæ libris pene hoc capitulum non habentibus; præsertim cum diversa atque contraria Evangelistis ceteris narrare videatur. Hier. ad Hedib. Quæst. 3. T. 4. p. 172.

tiny into this fact; it is the general opinion of the Critics, that the said verses were certainly a genuin part of that Gospel, but left out by scrupulous or weak Transcribers, as being thought irreconcilable with the other Gospels [a].

But to give an instance or two of the disagreement of the Evangelists, with regard to what passed at the sepulcher; they all tell us, that the women, who came with Jesus, out of Galilee, whose names and number are variously described, having bought sweet spices to anoint his dead body, ran with great eagerness to the sepulcher in the morning after the Sabbath, very early, at or before the break of day: where, according to *Matthew* and *Mark*, they saw but *one Angel*; according to *Luke* and *John*, they saw *two*. The Angel in *Matthew* was sitting without the sepulcher, on the stone, which he had rolled away from the door [b]. The Angel in *Mark* was sitting within the sepulcher on the right side [c]. The two Angels in *Luke*, appeared to them of a sudden within the sepulcher, and stood by them, while they were perplexed and doubting within themselves, what was become of the body of Jesus [d]: but the two Angels in *John* were seen by them, when they first looked into the sepulcher, the one sitting at the head, the other at the feet, where the body had layen [e].

To solve these inconsistencies, the Commentators, instead of a single apparition of one or more Angels, generally suppose, that there were several, at least *three*: and tho' the Evangelists seem to describe but one visit of the women to the sepulcher, they imagine, that there were many; sometimes of them all in company together; sometimes singly, now of one and then of another; as if they had done nothing that whole morning, but run backwards and forwards between the city and the tomb [f]. *Theophylact* says, "that the Angel, who was first

G 2

" seen

[a] Vid. Simon. Hist. Crit. du Nouveau Test. c. xi. it. Millii Not. in Mar. xvi. 8. Edit. N. T.

[b] Matt. xxviii. 2.

[c] Mar. xvi. 5.

[d] Luc. xxiv. 4.

[e] Joh. xx. 12.

[f] Quod diversa tempora mulierum describuntur, non mendacii signum est, ut impli obijciunt, sed sedulae visitationis officium: dum crebro abeunt & recurrunt. Hier. in Matt. xxviii. Fieri

“ seen sitting on the stone at the door, must be supposed to have
 “ risen up, as soon as the women arrived; and gone before them
 “ into the sepulcher, where he appeared to them again on the
 “ right, in order to make *Matthew* consistent with *Mark*: and
 “ *Austin* tells us, that the two Angels within the sepulcher, who
 “ were sitting, the one at the head, the other at the feet, where
 “ Jesus had lain, must be supposed to have stood up, as soon as
 “ the women entered, to reconcile *John*’s account with *Luke*’s [a].”
 And what effect can all this have, but to confirm that very
 charge, which they labor to elude, of confusion and inaccuracy in
 the sacred writers; by supposing them to have jumbled and
 blended into one story many different transactions, which, in
 order to be rightly understood, ought to have been separated and
 distinguished from each other?

According to *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke*, the women, as soon
 as they had seen the Angels, and were informed by them of our
 Lord’s resurrection, returned in all haste to carry the news of it to
 the Apostles; upon which *Peter* ran immediately to the sepul-
 cher. But *John*, who wrote the last of them, and after he had
 seen their accounts, tells a quite contrary story; that before
 any apparition, *Mary*, seeing onely the stone taken away from
 the door of the sepulcher, hastened back to tell it to *Peter*, and
 to the other Apostle, whom *Jesus* loved, and that *Peter*, accom-
 panied by that Apostle, ran away directly to the place, and saw the
 linnen cloaths lying and the napkin, which was about the head
 of *Jesus*, wrapped up in a place by itself, and then went back to
 their own home, without seeing any Angel, or *Jesus* himself, as
 the women are said to have done.

Dr. *Hammond* explaining the reason of this difference, says;
 “ that *Luke* writing from notes, which he had collected, and not

Fieri enim potuit, ut mulieres istæ non
 semel, neque omnes simul, sed semel simul,
 postea nunc hæc nunc illa, &c. Cuper.
 Arcana Atheism. revelat. 2. p. 172. it.
 Toinard. Harm. Evan. p. 132, &c.

[a] Vid. Theophyl. in Matt. xxviii.
 Hic intelligendi sunt surrexisse Angeli,
 ut etiam stantes viderentur, sicut eos Lu-
 cas commemorat. August. Conf. Evan.
 l. 3. §. 69.

“ from his own knowledge, observes not so exactly the order of
“ time, wherein things were done or spoken ; but oftentimes in
“ another method puts together things of affinity to one another,
“ though not done or said at the same time [a].”

But this solution, tho’ proper on other occasions, will not serve on this: because the want of order so observable, in the one, or the other of these narrations, seems chargeable to *John*, rather than to the rest, whose relation of the matter is again confirmed and repeated in the conversation of the *two Disciples going to Emmaus* [b]. *Grotius*, who usually imputes these difficulties to the general custom of the Evangelists, of neglecting the order of time, in which things were transacted, yet assigns a special reason, why *John*, in this particular case, might think fit to use a little artifice, and industriously invert the true order of the facts ; “ for lest the testimony of women, in a point of such moment, as *the resurrection of Jesus*, might be suspected and ridiculed, as it afterwards really was, *John*, he imagines, resolved to place *Peter’s* testimony and his own before it, tho’ out of their proper time: the truth of which, at the time of writing his Gospel, *Peter* had already sealed with his blood, as he himself was prepared also to do, whenever he should be called to it [c].”

It is very remarkable also, that the short Inscription or Title, which, by *Pilate’s* order, was fixed upon the Cross, over the head of *Jesus*, is delivered with some variation, by every one of the Evangelists.

Matthew says; They set up over his head his accusation written ;

[a] Hammond on Joh. xx. 11.

[b] Luc. xxiv. 23, 24.

[c] Apud Johannem eadem quæ hic historia narratur, nihil enim video cur aliam putemus, cum tot circumstantiæ, congruant. — Neque Johanni cur naturalem

hic ordinem inverteret justa causa defuit. Sciebat quam imbecille futurum esset apud multos testimonium muliebri — quare Johannes acturus de re, ut verissima, ita creditu difficili, suum & *Petri* testimonium narrationi præstruxit, &c. in Matt. xxviii. 2.

THIS

THIS IS IESVS THE KING OF THE IEWS [a].

Mark ; The superscription of his accusation was written over ;

THE KING OF THE IEWS [b].

Luke ; A superscription also was written over him, in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew ;

THIS IS THE KING OF THE IEWS [c].

John ; *Pilate* wrote a Title, and put it on the Cross, and the writing was ;

IESVS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE IEWS [d].

Now all these accounts agree very well with regard to the sense of them, yet it is certain, that there is but one of the four, which exhibits the true Inscription : and tho' a difference so trifling cannot reflect any disgrace on the veracity of the *Evangelists*, it shews however a want of that accuracy and exactness of truth, which we expect from all those, who undertake to transmit to posterity the authentic copies of public Inscriptions.

I shall add one instance more of the same kind, trifling indeed with regard to the point in difference, yet effectual to evince the same sort of inadvertency or mistake, with regard to the strictness of truth. *Matthew* reciting the testimony of *John Baptist*, concerning *Jesus*, gives these words as a part of it ; *whose shoes I am not worthy to bear* [e] : but the other *Evangelists* tell us, that the words were ; *the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose* [f]. Upon which *St. Austin* makes the follow-

[a] Matt. xxvii. 37.

[b] Mark xv. 26.

[c] Luke xxiii. 38.

[d] Joh. xix. 19.

[e] Matt. iii. 11.

[f] Mar. i. 7. Lu. iii. 16. Joh. i. 17.

ing remark: "that to carry shoes, and to untie the latchet of a shoe, seem indeed to be different, not in words only, or the order of them, or in the manner of speaking, but in the very thing or fact itself—so that he, who has recorded the words, which were really spoken by the Baptist, has told us the truth, while he, who has reported them differently, tho' he may not be guilty of a lie, will be thought to have put one thing for another through want of memory. But no sort of falsehood, whether it procede from a lie, or forgetfulness, ought to be imputed to the Evangelists: wherefore, if the Baptist, when he spoke of our Lord's shoes, had no other meaning, but to signify the excellence of Jesus and his own humility, it was the same thing, whether he spoke of carrying on untying, shoes; and whoever mentioned the shoes afterwards in either way, with the same view of expressing his humility, rightly expressed the Baptist's will and meaning [a]."

I shall not trouble the reader with any more instances of this kind, out of the great number, which has been collected by the writers on this subject: these which I have already produced, are sufficient for my purpose, and the use, which I shall now procede to make of them.

In the first place then, they manifestly shew, that many of the facts, which are recorded in the Gospels, are related so variously by the several Evangelists, that they cannot possibly be reconciled, or rendered consistent by all the art and subtilty of the most expert Commentators. Origen declares, "that if any one carefully examines the inconsistencies of the four Gospels with regard to historical facts,—he will find himself giddy, as it were, and no longer insist on the truth of them all, but chuse to adhere

[a] Non enim verbis, aut verborum ordine, aut aliquo genere locutionis, sed etiam re ipsa videtur aliud esse, *calceamenta portare*, aliud, *corrigiam calceamenti solvere*— Si enim alterum horum dixit, ille verum videtur narrasse, qui hoc potuit narrare quod dixit: qui autem aliud, etsi non

est mentitus, certe vel oblitus, aliud pro alio dixisse putabitur. Omnem autem falsitatem abesse ab Evangelistis decet; non solum eam, quæ mentiando promitur, sed etiam eam, quæ obliviscendo, &c. De Consensu Evangelist. l. 2. §. 29.

“ to one of them singly, not daring wholly to reject the faith of
 “ Christ; or else, if he admits them all, he must allow at the
 “ same time, that the truth of them does not lie in the outward
 “ character or letter of them [a].” It will be answered perhaps,
 that *Origen* was so addicted to the Allegorical sense of Scripture,
 and so prejudiced in it's favor, as not to care, what absurdities
 were charged upon the literal text, if he could but draw a
 mystery out of it. But tho' this be granted, it will not invali-
 date his charge of inconsistency on the letter of the Gospels; of
 which, by his indefatigable study of the Scriptures, he was of all
 men the most competent Judge; and it was the reality of this
 very charge, which gave birth to those extravagant interpretations,
 in which he indulged himself [b].

St. Austin lays down a general rule for the solution of all these
 difficulties, which he earnestly recommends to our attention and
 observance; “ that whenever we find the Evangelists inconsistent,
 “ in their accounts of any thing said, or done by our Lord, we
 “ are not to suppose them speaking of the same thing, but of
 “ some other, very like to it, said or done at a different time.
 “ For it is a *sacrilegious vanity*, he says, to calumniate the
 “ Gospels, rather than believe the same thing to have been twice
 “ performed, when no man can prove, that it could not really be
 “ so: and when this rule fails, his next direction is, to take up
 “ with any solution, rather than allow it as a consequence, that
 “ any of the Evangelists had been guilty either of a lie, or a
 “ mistake [c].” Which is nothing else in effect, but to require
 us,

[a] Comment. in Johan. T. 2. p. 151. Edit. Huet.

[b] Ego, in Scripturarum enarratione, unum Originem decem Orthodoxis anteposuerim. *Erasmi*. in Gal. ii. 10.

[c] Quod commendare memoriae diligenter debemus — ut si quando talia singula apud singulos invenerimus, atque in eis contrarium, quod solvi non possit, occurrat nobis, non hoc esse factum, sed aliud

simile — De Conf. Evang. l. 2. §. 69.

Etiam atque etiam retinendum est, sæpius Dominum eadem dixisse, ut quod existente contrario solvi non potuerit, bis dictum intelligatur. Ib. l. 2. §. 106.

Calumniari autem Evangelio, dum non credit iterum factum, quod iterum fieri non potuisse nemo convincit, Sacrilegæ vanitatis est. Ib. §. 77.

Tantum

us, to adhere to Systems in opposition to facts, and to renounce our senses, rather than our prejudices. His rule however has been religiously observed by the Commentators, who recur to it on all occasions, and declare the same thing to have been done twice or thrice, or till the repetition of it will clear up every difficulty, which disturbs and perplexes them.

But the point, which I am affirming, is evidently proved, not only by the facts and instances produced above, but by the very solutions and interpretations, which are given of them upon the contrary hypothesis, which tho' contrived by men of the greatest learning and sagacity in all ages, are yet generally speaking so forced and unnatural, that they betray themselves, to be nothing else, but an artful defence of error. Whereas if they would but candidly own, as some few of them indeed have done, that the contradictions of the Evangelists, like to those of all other Authors, were owing to want of accuracy in recording circumstances of little moment; or to slips of memory, or to different informations, all would be easily and naturally accounted for, without any real offence or hurt to the authority of the Gospel.

For to run over again the several instances produced above; what advantage can the enemies of our religion draw from the difficulties, which are found in the two Genealogies? since they both of them agree, in affirming all, which a Christian is concerned to believe on that article; *that Jesus was of the seed of Abraham; of the family of David; and born in the flesh of the Virgin Mary.* What can it signify to us, whether it was *one woman only, or two*, who anointed *Jesus*; or whether they anointed his head or his feet? since all that is instructive in the story may be equally learnt in either case; from the woman, that extraordinary mercies should produce a proportionable return of gratitude and love: from *Jesus*, a prediction, which we see accomplished at this day; *that the zeal of this woman should be propa-*

Tantum non putes consequens esse, ut quis erraverit. De Conf. Evang. l. 3. §. 43.
in tanto & tam sancto culmine auctorita-

H

gated

REFLECTIONS *on the Variations,*

gated with his Gospel over the face of the earth [a]. Of what consequence can it be, that *Judas's* treachery is told with some variation by the different Evangelists? since all, that is of service to religion, is equally clear in them all; that *Jesus* foretold to his Disciples both the Traitor and his treason, that when it should come to pass, *they might believe him to be the Christ [b].* Of what use could it be to know, whether it was *one or two* possessed with Devils; and *one or two* blind, whom *Jesus* cured, and whether it happened, as he was going or as he was returning from *Jericho*? it is enough to be assured, that all kinds of diseases yielded equally to his power, and were cured by the word of his mouth. Lastly, what if the Evangelists do not agree about the precise time of his crucifixion; whether it was at *the third or the sixth hour*: or in the story of his resurrection, whether *one or two Angels* appeared; whether *sitting or standing*; or whether *before or after Peter's coming* to the Sepulchre? it is sufficient, that they agree, in confirming all the principal circumstances, and in declaring them to have been accompanied with such prodigies, as were suitable to the dignity and importance of those great events.

Nay, all these differences and inconsistencies are so far from reflecting any discredit on Christianity, that on the contrary, they are found to be of real service, towards illustrating the truth of it. *This very thing, says Theophylact, gives a stronger proof of the integrity of the Evangelists, that they have not agreed in all points: for otherwise, they might have been suspected to have written by compact [c].* But while they really tend to establish the authority of the Evangelists, they clearly overthrow that hypothesis, which is commonly entertained concerning them, that in compiling their several Gospels, *they were constantly inspired and directed by an unerring Spirit.* This, I say, is evident, as well from the facts above stated, as from the express declarations of the Evangelists themselves, who are so far from pretending to any such privilege,

[a] Matt. xxvi. 13.

[b] Joh. xiii. 19.

[c] Δι' αὐτὸ γὰρ τὸ μᾶλλον ἀληθεύ-

σιν, ὅτι μὴ κατὰ πάντα ὁμοφώνησαν, &c.
Theophyl. Proem. in Matt.

that

that they in effect disclame it, placing their whole credit on a foundation, merely human and common to all other writers ; on their knowledge of the truth of what they deliver, and on their fidelity in delivering it to the best of their knowledge.

Luke professes, that he had received all the principal facts of his Gospel, *from those, who had been eye-witnesses and actors in them ; from whom he had got a perfect information of all things from the very beginning* [a]. John declares, *that he himself saw, and was present at all the transactions, which he relates : that he knew them therefore to be true, and recorded them, that others also might know and believe them :* which declaration he repeats in the end of his Gospel, as the seal of it's veracity [b]. And this is the same profession, which is made by all other Historians, in order to procure credit to what they relate. Herodotus declares in several places, *that he writes from his own knowledge and eye-sight :* and in others, *from the best information, which he could get :* and Thucydides tells us, like John, *that he himself was present at many of the transactions recorded by him, and in others, like Luke, that he had done every thing in his power, to procure an exact account of them from those, who had been actors in them* [c]. And this likewise is the foundation, on which the Advocates of Christianity, both antient and modern, have constantly put the credibility of the Evangelical history ; that the Authors of it were, either eye-witnesses of it themselves, or wrote from the information of those, who were. Which reasoning, as solid and rational as it has been thought in all ages, yet, upon the hypothesis of a perpetual inspiration, would be wholly trifling and impertinent ; since it could not be of any moment, whether they knew any thing or nothing of the matters related by them, if as some vainly imagine, they were but mere organs or pipes, through which God

[a] Luc. i. 1, 2.

[b] Joh. xix. 35 : xxi. 24 : 1 Ep. i. 1, 2, 3.

[c] Τα δὲ αὐτοὶ θεασάμενοι λέγομεν, τῶν μὲν κάτω ἀκοῇ παραλαβόντες. Herod. l.

2. p. 147. Edit. Lond.

Οἱς αὐτὸς τὴν παρῆν, καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσων δυνάσκει ἀκριβῆς περὶ ἑκάστου ἐπιγράψων. Thucyd. l. 1. p. 13. Ed. Oxon.

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thought fit to convey the knowledge of certain extraordinary facts and divine truths to the world [a].

It was once thought necessary, for the honor of the Greek translation of the Old Testament, called the *Septuagint*, to believe, “that it was divinely inspired and dictated by God: and that seventy persons shut up separately in as many different cells, produced their several translations, all agreeing to a tittle with each other, both in the sense and the words.” This, though affirmed by all the primitive Fathers, as well as by many of the learned moderns, is now universally considered, as an undoubted fiction, contrived for the sake of conciliating the greater reverence to that antient version; which was read, instead of the original Hebrew, in all the Synagogues of the Hellenistic Jews [b]. For besides the absurdities, which are charged upon this story, and the impertinence of recurring to a miracle, where there was no occasion for it, and where nothing was wanted to make such a translation, but a competent skill in two languages, the many imperfections of the version itself confute the pretence of its divine origin. The case is the same with the Gospels: the hypothesis of their inspiration was piously invented, to reflect the greater luster upon them, where there was not the least want of it: since nothing more is required to establish their authority, than to know, as we do in this case, that the compilers of them were perfectly informed of all the important facts, which they had undertaken to relate, and zealous to publish them for the common benefit of mankind: while many little omissions and inaccuracies, which

[a] Spiritus Sancti, cujus ipsi erant organa. Casaub. Exercit. 15. ad Baron. Ann. 12.

Ita nimirum, ut non solum sententiæ, sed & verba singula & verborum ordo ac tota dispositio sit a Deo, tanquam per semetipsum loquente. — Estius. in 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Litterulam unam aut notham esse, aut inscio Evangelista irrepsisse nego. Light-

foot, in Matt. xxvii. 9.

[b] Traditur sane mirabilem, planeque divinum in eorum verbis fuisse consensum, ut cum ad hoc opus separatim singuli sederint, ita enim eorum fidem Ptolomæo placuit explorare, in nullo verbo, vel verborum ordine alter ab altero discreparet, &c. August. de Civ. D. l. 18. c. 42. See this story related at large and confuted in Dr. Prideaux's Connect. Vol. 2. p. 21.

are

are observable in their several narratives, clearly shew, that they could not be guided by a divine and infallible spirit. But this will be made still more evident, by considering, what the Antients have delivered to us concerning them.

Matthew, as the primitive writers generally agree, wrote his Gospel the first, and in the *Hebrew tongue*: which, for that reason, could not be of general use, nor hardly indeed any farther, than to the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, where it was published: for the Greek language was used at that time not onely by the Jews, even in their own country, but was the universal language of the East [a]. This original Gospel then being of little or no service beyond the precincts of *Jerusalem*, was soon laid aside, and within a few ages afterwards quite lost; and a Greek translation of it made by *some body unknown*, took it's place very early, and was received in all Churches, as it is at this day, with a credit and authority equal to that of an Original. In which, tho' the Translator may be presumed to have been both faithful and equal to the task, yet, for any thing that we know, he may have been guilty of some mistakes, as *St. Jerom* supposes him to have actually been, and endeavours to shew, in one particular instance [b].

Mark followed *Matthew*; and perceiving, as we may imagine, in his travels, that an History of our Saviour's life and acts was every where wanted and greedily desired, by the new converts, he wrote his Gospel, under the direction, as it is believed, of *St. Peter*, whose disciple he was: in which, tho' he has made some few variations, as well as additions to the former Gospel of

[a] Solus Matthæus Hebræo scripsisse perhibetur eloquio, ceteri Græco. Aug. de Conf. Evang. l. 1. §. 4.

Primus Matthæus Evangelium in Judæa Hebræo Sermonem edidit. Hieron. Proem. in Matth. Vid. Græcor. Patrum testimonia de Matthæo a Millio collect. in Edit. N. T.

—Excepto sermone Græco, quo omnis Oriens loquitur. Hieron. in Epist. ad Galat. Op. T. 4. p. 255. Vid. Lightf.

Hor. Heb. in Matth. 1.

[b] Quod quis postea in Græcum transtulerit non satis certum. Hieron. de Scriptorib. Eccles. in Matt.

Mihi videtur Matthæum, qui Evangelium Hebraico sermone conscripsit, non tam *vespere* dixisse, quam *sero*; & eum, qui interpretatus est, verbi ambiguitate deceptum, non *sero*, interpretatum esse, sed *vespere*. Ad Hedib. T. 4. par. 1. p. 173.

Matthew, yet he agrees with it so exactly in most particulars, that as it is said above, he is thought by the Commentators to have done little more than epitomize it [a].

Luke comes next, a Physician of *Antioch*, and a convert probably from paganism: who perceiving, that many others had published accounts, either false or imperfect, concerning the life and actions of *Jesus*, thought it necessary to write a third Gospel, under the direction, as it is thought, of *St. Paul*; and to the intent, as he himself declares, that the new Christians might be informed of the certain truth of those things, in which they had been instructed, and of which he had procured a perfect information from those, who had been eye-witnesses. But as he wrote at second hand and from hearsay only, of things, which he himself had not seen, he is observed to have jumbled his facts together more confusedly, and described them more inaccurately, than the rest, who related them from their own knowledge [b].

John

[a] Marcus eum subsequutus, brevior ejus videtur. August. de Consens. Evan. l. 1. §. 4.

Ut sæpe ei præstet interpretis vicem. Grot. in Matt. xxviii. 1.

[b] Vid. Testimonia Græcor. de Luca a Millio collecta.

Evangelium, sicut audierat, scripsit; Acta vero Apostolorum, sicut viderat. Hieron. de Scriptorib. Eccles.

Apparet illum non semel ob rerum coherentiam, connexuisse quæ temporibus erant discreta, quod suis locis patefiet. Grot. in Luc. i. ver. 3.

Luke, who wrote his story from collections, which he had from others, and compiled it himself, hath not so exactly observed the order, wherein the things were done, &c. Hammond. Pref. in Matt.

N. B. This account of *Luke* may help us to solve that difficulty in the Martyr *Stephen's* speech, [Act. vii. 16.] in which it is said, that the Patriarchs were buried

in *Sichem*, in the Sepulcher, which *Abraham* bought of the Sons of *Emmor*: whereas, it was not *Abraham*, but *Jacob*, who bought that Sepulcher: and the Sepulcher, which *Abraham* purchased, was in a different place, and bought of a different person; *Ephron the Hittite, the Son of Zobar*. [Gen. xxiii. it. xxxiii. 19. it. Josh. xxiv. 32.] This passage then, as it now stands in the book of the Acts, is a manifest contradiction to the truth of history, as all the Critics acknowledge; some of whom have attempted to give an emendation of the text, but to no purpose, since the consent of all the copies in all ages effectually establishes the present reading: others have severally offered the best solutions, which they could invent, yet all of them forced and ridiculous, and no body, besides *Cappellus*, has ventured to intimate, that it might possibly be a slip of memory in *Stephen* himself. Vid. *Cappelli* Not. in Act. vii. 16.

John published his Gospel, the last of the four, to supply the defects and imperfections of the other three; moved to it, as the Primitive Fathers inform us, "by the earnest solicitation of his friends and of all the Bishops of *Asia*, who were persuaded, that such an history from him, would be of more service, and more likely to gain credit, than any, which were already published. Whereupon, at their request, having read over the other Gospels, he confirmed in general the truth of them, yet observed, that many things of consequence were either wholly omitted or too slightly touched in them; especially the actions of *Jesus*, which preceded the death of *John the Baptist*, and almost all those miracles, which deserved the most to be recorded, and were the properest for instruction; and above all, the declaration of his divinity and existence, prævious to his birth at *Bethlehem*. For which reasons, as all the Antients affirm, he undertook at last, with some reluctance, to write his own Gospel in a very advanced age:" which on that account *Grotius* calls a collection of things, omitted by the other three. And thus, as a writer of Antiquity observes, "we have now a complete and perfect history of the Life and Acts of *Jesus*: for what was not taken notice of by *Matthew*, is recorded by *Mark*: what was forgotten by *Mark*, is added by *Luke*: and what was omitted still by all the three, is supplied by *John* [a]."

This

But it does not seem probable, that a person full of the Holy Ghost, as *Stephen* is said to have been, and who appears also, from this very speech, to have been greatly conversant with the *Mosaic* writings, should be capable of committing such a blunder, which may easily and naturally be accounted for by ascribing it to *Luke*, the compiler of the *Acts*; who being a late convert from Paganism, and but imperfectly acquainted with the Jewish learning and history, might easily mistake in the names of persons, and confound two

facts so nearly resembling each other. So that *Cappellus* might, with as much reason, have charged *Luke* with a mistake here, as he has actually done elsewhere, in the case of *Theudas*, the Impostor, who according to *Josephus*, did not make his appearance, till several years after that time, in which *Luke* introduces him. *Acts* vii. 16. vid. *Cappelli* not.

[a] Coactus est ab omnibus pene tunc *Asiæ* Episcopis, & multarum Ecclesiarum legationibus de divinitate Salvatoris altius scribere, &c. *Hieron.* Prolog. in *Matt.*—

Vid.

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This is the Summ of what primitive Antiquity has delivered, concerning the history of the Gospels: which is utterly inconsistent with the notion of their being divinely inspired: for if any one of them had been a perfect work, as every work must needs be, which is directed by the Spirit of God, there had been no use or want of the rest; nor would they in reality have been written: unless we can believe, with some of the Primitive Fathers, *that it was necessary, that there should be four: because there are four elements; four climates; four cardinal winds; four cardinal virtues, &c.* [a].

The belief then of *the Inspiration and absolute infallibility of the Evangelists*, seems to be more absurd, than even of Transubstantiation itself: for this, tho' repugnant to sense, is supported by the express words of Scripture; whereas the other, not less contrary to sense, is contrary at the same time to the declarations of the Evangelists themselves. Yet such is the force of prejudice, that the generality of Expositors take great pains to search out texts and arguments for the support of this favorite hypothesis; not considering, that if they were able to produce any, from which they could extort such an interpretation, it would tend onely to the hurt and discredit of Christianity itself, by fastening upon it a doctrine, contradictory to fact and experience.

But in truth, all the arguments which are alledged for this doctrine, are generally so trifling, that instead of confirming, they render it onely more contemptible to men of judgement. Thus the learned *Lightfoot* attempts to prove the divine inspiration of *Luke*, from the word *ἀνωθεν*, in the preface of his Gospel, which implies, as is interpreted by this Critic, that *Luke* had received his information of the things, which he relates, *from above or from heaven* [b]: whereas it signifies nothing more, but that he had searched,

Vid. Testimonia Patrum Græcor. de *Johanne*, a Millio collecta—

Additum a Johanne, in hac quasi premissorum collectione. Grot. in Joh.

[a] Quatuor, quoniam quatuor sunt

partes Orbis terræ, &c. August. de Conf. Evang. l. 1. §. 3. it. vid. Irenæum. l. 3. c. 11. Theophyl. Proæm. in Matth.

[b] Affecuto omnia cœlitus vel e supernis— Hunc sensum nos amplectimur: utpote

searched and traced them out from their very source, or beginning: in which sense it is frequently applied by all the best writers of antiquity, and even by *Luke* himself in another place [a].

I shall not dwell therefore any longer on the proof of this point; which from the facts above recited, and the professions of the Evangelists themselves, as well as the accounts, which are given of them by the antients, seems evident to a demonstration; but shall procede, as I at first proposed, to consider, what use may be made of the opinion here affirmed, in the controversies, which have been agitated, concerning *the grounds of Christianity*, and especially in those, which relate to *the prophecies of the Old Testament*, as they are cited and applied in the New.

Soon after *Jesus* had entered upon his ministry, and gathered to himself a number of Disciples, he chose out of them, twelve, to be his immediate companions and constant attendants during his residence on earth, and after his ascension into heaven, to be the principal instruments of publishing his religion to all nations. These were called his Apostles; persons of the lowest condition of life, chiefly Fishermen; void of every ornament and advantage, which learning, art, and languages usually add to the characters and faculties of men: and chosen by their Master, for this very reason, that the triumphs of his Gospel might be the more conspicuous, in subduing all the powers and wisdom of the world by the ministry of persons so abject and despicable. The Jews in the mean while, to whom the Gospel was in the first place proposed, were zealously fond of their old religion, and on that account, strongly prejudiced against his new one: and being forbidden by their law, to give credit even to miracles, when wrought in favour of doctrines, which seemed to contradict the institutions of *Moses*, were the more jealous, and on their guard against this new Prophet; lest by his mighty works, he might lead the people astray from their antient worship. Wherefore

pote quod extra omnem controversiam sit, in Luc. i. & in Act. i.

eum cœlesti afflatu calamum dirigente ea [a] Vid. *Erasm.* & *Grot.* in Luc. i. 3.

scripsisse, quæ scripsit. Vid. *Hor.* *Hebraic.* it. in Act. xxvi. 5.

I

Jesus,

Jesus, in order to remove their scruples, and calm their apprehensions, took all occasions to convince them, that he was not come to *destroy*, but to *fulfill their law*; that he was the *very Messiah*, whom *Moses and the Prophets* had foretold and prepared them to expect; and that his character and commission were clearly described and prefigured to them in their own books, to which he appealed, as the witnesses of his veracity [a].

This was the general doctrine of *Jesus*: but the Evangelists have recorded but very few of the particular prophecies, which he applied, to the confirmation of it: the event however shews, that it was so well supported by him, as to have great weight with many of the Jews.

The Apostles then, having been specially instructed in this point by their Master, before his death, and more clearly still after his resurrection, no sooner entered upon their ministry, than they made this, as they were commanded [b], the chief subject of their preaching; that the person and character of *Jesus* were described and foretold by the law and the Prophets: by the force of which argument the Apostle *Peter*, in one of his first sermons, is said to have converted *three thousand souls* [c]. The rest of the Apostles, as we may imagine, were not less zealous and active, in publishing the same doctrine, both by preaching and writing: and *Matthew* especially, who wrote his Gospel for the particular information of the Jews, appears to have been more diligent than any of them, in searching the old Scriptures for passages, which in any sense could be applied to some circumstance or action of *Jesus's* life: and like all other men warmly persuaded, and fond of a new hypothesis, seems to have strained it in a few instances, farther than it would naturally reach, and to have applied it even to some, to which it has no relation at all.

Mr. *Whiston*, of whose piety and zeal for the honor of Christianity no man can doubt, has freely and candidly owned, that

[a] Matt. v. 17. Joh. v. 39, 45, 46, &c.

[b] Act. x. 42.

[c] Act. ii. 41.

the Apostles might possibly be supposed, to have been mistaken sometimes in their applications of these prophecies [a]. If their inspiration therefore, or infallibility was thrown out of this question, what I am here saying of *Matthew*, would readily be admitted; that, out of zeal for an Hypothesis, of whose truth he was assured, he might be apt, like all other men, to stretch it to cases, to which it did not belong. This is allowed with regard to the *Jewish Doctors*, by an ingenious and orthodox Defender of Christianity, who says; "that under the strong expectations, which they entertained of the coming of a *Messiah*, it may well be supposed, that the learned among them had, with more than ordinary attention, searched the prophetic writings for marks and designations of him, and might probably apprehend him to be delineated in some passages, which had no relation to him. If we consider the obscurity of the prophecies before their completion; how apt a man, who reads such writings with an intention to one point, would be, to fancy a relation to it, and with what fondness he would entertain any appearance of so reputable a discovery; it can scarce be imagined, but that instances of this kind must have happened [b]." What this writer thinks so probable of the learned Doctors of the Jews, must needs appear more probable of the Apostles, who were not learned; who, as I have shewn elsewhere, being liable to slight mistakes, and inadvertencies, in the representation of plain and ordinary events, may more reasonably be presumed to be so, in the interpretation of dark prophecies. But as it is not my design to inquire into probabilities, but into facts, so I shall lay before the reader two or three examples of *Matthew's* method of citing and applying the prophecies of the *Old Testament* to the transactions of the New.

Thus, says he, it is written by the Prophet; *And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah, art by no means the least among the Princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a Governor, who shall rule my people Israel.* But the words of the Prophet are; *But thou*

[a] See his Litteral Accomplishment, p. 20. §. x. [b] Dr. Rogers Sermon. 5. p. 123.

Bethlehem Ephratah, *though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee, &c.* [a]. *St. Jerom* observes on this place, "that there is a strange difference between *Matthew* and the "Septuagint-translation of the Bible, but a stranger still between "him and the Hebrew text, for he agrees with neither of them "either in the words or the sense." And he suggests two reasons for this disagreement; "that *Matthew* might probably intend, by "this way of applying Scripture, to reprove the *Scribes and Pharisees*, who used the same negligent manner of interpreting it: "or else, that the Evangelists and Apostles did not cite the passages of the Old Testament from books, but from their memories, which sometimes failed them, and gave rise to those "variations, which are found among them in the order, and in "the words, and sometimes also in the sense [b]."

Modern Commentators are generally more cautious of charging the least suspicion of a mistake on the Evangelist, tho' they cannot reconcile his meaning with that of the Prophet: but *Erasmus* laughs at the weakness of those, "who take the authority of the "Scriptures to be endangered by the allowance of an error in "them, and declares; that the divine Spirit, who governed the "minds of the Apostles, suffered them on some occasions to err, "through ignorance, affection, or wrong judgement, without "any real detriment to the credit of the Gospel [c]."

Matthew having shewn the place of our Saviour's birth to have been foretold by the Prophets, proceeds to shew the same also, concerning the place of his habitation. *He came*, says he, *and dwelt in a City called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled, which*

[a] Matt. ii. 5, 6. Micah. v. 2.

[b] Quanta sit inter Matthæum & Septuaginta, verborum ordinisq; discordia, sic magis admiraberis, si Hebraicum videas — sensusque contrarius est, Septuaginta sibi hoc in loco & Hebraico concordante. — Hieron. de Opt. gen. interpret. T. 4. par. 2. p. 253. — It. Ejusdem

Comm. in Micah. v. T. 3. p. 531.

[c] Neque enim continuo vacillet totius Scripturæ auctoritas, sicubi variet vel in verbis vel in sensu — Spiritus ille divinus mentium Apostolicarum moderator passus est suos ignorare quædam & labi, &c. in Matt. ii. 6.

was spoken by the Prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene [a]. Now it is agreed by all, that the passage cited here by *Matthew*, as delivered by the Prophets, is not to be found in any Prophet or writer of the Old Testament whatsoever: and it is pleasant to see, to what ridiculous shifts the Commentators are driven, in their attempts to account for it [b]. They first adapt some particular senses of their own to the word, *Nazarene*, in which still they all differ from each other, and then labor to shew, that in one or other of those senses, it may be collected from several dispersed passages, and obscure hints found in different parts of the Old Testament. *Grotius* tells us, that when the Evangelists cite the Prophets, in this loose and general manner, it frequently indicates a sense, picked up from many separate passages of the Old Testament, rather than from any single text [c]. Yet no man has ever pretended to make out from any or all those different texts, that sense of the word *Nazarene*, which is here applied by *Matthew*, to denote an inhabitant of Nazareth. The difficulty is, says Dr. *Hammond*, how his dwelling at Nazareth should be said to be the completion of a prophecy, which relates not at all to his dwelling there [d]. The learned, says *Heinsius*, have taken such pains about this passage, that whole books have been written upon it; yet not one writer has been able to hit upon any thing, which could satisfy even himself [e].

Again; Then was fulfilled, says *Matthew*, that which was spoken by *Jeremiah the Prophet*, saying; and they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the Potter's field, as the Lord appointed me [f]. This prophecy, as all the Expositors allow, is

[a] Matt. ii. 23.

[b] This text, says Mr. *Whiston*, is entirely wanting in all our Copies, Hebrew and Greek, nor do there at present the least footsteps of it remain, since the Jews corrupted their Copies.— See Essay on the O. T. p. 104. it. The Litteral Accom-

plishment of Script. Prophecies, p. 4.

[c] Sæpe sensum multis ex locis depromptum, magis quam unius loci verba indicat. &c. *Grot.* in loc.

[d] *Hammond* in loc.

[e] *Heinsii Exercitat. Sacr.* in loc.

[f] Matt. xxvii. 9, 10.

not to be found in the Prophet *Jeremiah*, from whom it is expressly cited. "Something like to it, says *Jerom*, is to be met " with in *Zachariah*; which, tho' not differing much in sense, " yet varies greatly in the words, and in the order of them. I " have seen however, adds he, this very text word for word, in " an apocryphal book of *Jeremiah*, which a Jew lately shewed " me: yet the prophecy seems rather to have been taken from " *Zachariah* [a]." He was unwilling to impute here to *Matthew*, the practice of citing his prophetical testimonies from apocryphal books, which yet others, both among the antients and moderns, have not scrupled to affirm likewise very freely of *St. Paul*, and the other Apostles [b]. It is observed by the Critics, that some few copies of the New Testament, in the early ages, had not the word *Jeremiah* in this text; which they suppose to have been omitted designedly by the Transcribers, for the sake of clearing *Matthew* from the imputation of a mistake: as *Austin* himself, from the consent of the best Greek copies, is forced to allow [c]; tho' of all the primitive Fathers, he seems the

[a] Hoc testimonium in *Jeremiah* non invenitur: in *Zachariah* vero quædam similitudo fertur: & quanquam sensus non multum discrepet, tamen & ordo & verba diversa sunt. Legi nuper in quodam Hebraico volumine, quod mihi Hebræus obtulit, *Jeremia Apocryphum*, in quo hæc ad verbum scripta reperi. Sed tamen mihi videtur magis de *Zacharia* sumptum testimonium in *Matt.* xxvii. T. 4. p. 134.

[b] Ut omittam longas & varias inquisitiones quibus hunc locum nonnulli interpretum involvunt hoc mihi simplicissimum judicatur, ut dicamus Evangelistam ex apocrypho quodam *Jeremia* volumine hoc desumpsisse testimonium, &c. Vid. Zeger. in *Matt.* xxvii. 9. Vid. it. Grotium in loc.

Zacharias, Chrysopolitanus Episcopus, p. 343. testatur se hoc testimonium invenisse

in secretis *Elie Prophetæ*, qui liber est Apocryphus, non Canonicus. Eadem scribit Georgius Syncellus, cujus verba invenies apud Scaligerum in notis ad Eusebium, de Apostolo etiam Paulo libros Apocryphos citante. Drusius, in 1 Ep. ad Corinth. ii. 9. it. Zeger. ibid.—Vid. etiam de Christo Apocryphis utente. Orig. Comm. in *Matt.* p. 225. Edit. Huet.

[c] Vid. Millii Notas in loc. it. Grot. ibid.

Qui diligentius in Græcis Codicibus Evangelium consideraverunt, in antiquioribus Græcis ita se perhibent invenisse—cur autem de nonnullis Codicibus tolleretur, audax imperitia fecit, cum turbaretur questione, quod hoc testimonium apud *Jeremiam* non inveniretur. August. de Conf. Evang. l. 3. §. 29.

most bigotted to the notion, *that the Evangelists could not err*. To heal this difficulty therefore, he gives us two solutions of his own invention, but both of them strangely absurd and ridiculous.

First; he says, "that *Matthew* was directed by the Holy Spirit, "to commit this mistake of putting *Jeremiah* for *Zachariah*; "which upon recollection, he would surely have corrected, if he "had not been convinced, that it was suggested by the secret "counsil of Providence for wise purposes. For since all the "Prophets were inspired by one and the same Spirit, and had "but one and the same view in their writings, people would see "by this instance, that it was wholly indifferent, which of them "was named or cited, for what was said by any of them; and "that the sayings of *Zachariah* were as much *Jeremiah's* as *Zachariah's*, and so vice versa; so that there was no occasion for "*Matthew*, to correct this seeming blunder, when he knew himself, at the time of making it, to be under the direction of the "Holy Ghost [a]."

2dly, He observes, "that there is an account in *Jeremiah*, "how the Prophet bought a field of his Uncle's son; not indeed "for *thirty pieces of silver*, for these are mentioned onely by *Zachariah*, as the purchase of a field is mentioned onely by *Jeremiah*: the reader therefore finding *Jeremiah* cited in the Gospel, and not finding in *Jeremiah*, the *thirty pieces of silver*, "which are added by *Matthew*, might thence be admonished, "that these also were applicable to *Jesus*, and so come at the sense "of another prophecy, which was mystically related to him." As to the rest of this text in *Matthew*; *the price of him, that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the Potter's field, as the Lord appointed me*. "It is not, "as he says, to be found, either in *Zachariah* or *Jeremiah*, but "was mystically and elegantly added by the *Evangelist*, who had "learnt from Christ himself, that it related to *the thirty pieces of silver*, for which he was sold: for as the price of the field

[a] Ibid. §. 30.

“ in *Jeremiah* is said, to have been put into an earthen vessel, so
 “ the price of *Jesus* was applied to the purchase of a Potter’s
 “ field [a].”

This explication was too extravagant, to be followed, as usual, by modern Commentators: who account therefore for this difficulty, by supposing either some inadvertency of the first transcribers, in putting *Jeremiah* for *Zachariah*; or a slip of memory in *Matthew* himself, or, what is more probable, that the passage was cited from that apocryphal book of *Jeremiah*, in which *St. Jerom* had read it word for word: which they shew, to have been the case likewise of many other passages of the New Testament [b]. *Jerom* indeed tells us, “ that when we meet with any citations
 “ made by the Apostles, as from the Prophets, which cannot be
 “ found in the Old Testament, we must not recurr presently to
 “ the absurdities of apocryphal books, but believe them to be really
 “ written in the old Scriptures, yet cited by the Apostles, not according to the words, but to the meaning of them; so that it
 “ cannot easily be discovered, in what part of the Scriptures they
 “ are written, except by the learned and studious [c].” And to say the truth; the learned may draw what senses they please out of any book whatsoever, by the same method, with which they have made out the sense of the passages now before us.

Lastly, *Matthew* speaking of *Jesus* says; *He cast out Spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick; that it might be ful-*

[a] August. de Conf. Evang. l. 3. §. 30.

[b] Aut enim culpa Scribarum commutatum nomen aut memoriæ vitio. *Erasm.* in *Matt.* xxvii. 8.

Jeremiæ nomen irrepsisse videtur, vel culpa excipientis, vel memoriæ vitio. *Drusus.* *ibid.* Vid. *it.* *Bezam.* *Lightfoot.*

Hoc mihi simplicissimum videtur, Evangelistam ex Apocrypho quodam *Jeremiæ* volumine sumsisse testimonium, & idem quoque Apostolum Paulum fecisse. *Zeger.* *ib.* Tale *Enochi* illud apud *Judam.* [14,

15.] tale illud. [1 *Cor.* ii. 9.] *Grot.* *ibid.*

[c] Hoc autem totum nunc idcirco observavimus, ut etiam in ceteris locis, si cubi testimonia quasi de Prophetis, & de veteri Testamento ab Apostolis usurpata sunt, & in nostris Codicibus non habentur, nequaquam statim ad Apocryphorum ineptias & deliramenta curramus; sed sciamus scripta ea quidem esse in Veteri Testamento, sed non ita ab Apostolis edita, &c. in *Epist.* ad *Ephes.* Op. T. 4. p. 392.

filled

filled, which was spoken by Isaiah, saying; himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses [a]. Erasmus remarks here, "that, in the application of this prophecy, Matthew has wrested it a little to his own purpose [b]." It is taken from the 53d chapter of *Isaiah*, where the Prophet is describing the character of a suffering *Messiah*, who was to take our sins upon him, and give himself up to death for the expiation of them: to which sense *Jesus* himself often alludes, declaring, that he came to give his life a ransom for many, and that his blood was shed for many, for the remission of sins [c]. And to this sense all the other Apostles constantly apply it; telling us; how *Jesus* bare our sins, in his own body, on the tree; was offered for the sins of many; was the Lamb slain, and propitiation made for the sins of the whole world [d]. But what the Prophet had foretold of a *Messiah*, taking upon himself our sins, the Evangelist applies to *Jesus*, as taking away our bodily diseases: an interpretation, wholly foreign to the meaning of the prophecy; peculiar to *Matthew*; and nowhere confirmed by any other of the sacred writers.

These instances are sufficient for the use, which I propose to make of them.

As to the first; the best solution, which has been given of it, is; "that either *Matthew's* memory failed him in the recital of it; or that he cited it imperfectly and inaccurately on purpose, to reprove the Scribes and Pharisees for the same loose and negligent method of interpreting the Scriptures, in which they freely indulged themselves."

The second, as all the Interpreters agree, is not to be found in any part of the Old Testament; and the whole, which is said for it, is, "that in some sense or other, it may be collected from several different expressions of different Prophets, joined and tacked together; and so made to suit, by way of accommo-

[a] Matt. viii. 16, 17.

[b] Adduxit hoc testimonium Matthæus, nonnihil ad suum deflectens negotium. Erasmus, in loc.

[c] Matt. xx. 28. xxvi. 28.

[d] Heb. ix. 28. Rom. iii. 25. 1 Pet. ii. 24. 1 Joh. ii. 2, &c.

"dation [a], as Dr. Hammond says, with some particular circumstance of *Jesus's* life.

The third was taken, in all probability, from a spurious and apocryphal book, of no authority, falsely ascribed to the Prophet *Jeremiah*, in which it was read by *St. Jerom*, and never found in any other [b].

The fourth is manifestly strained by *Matthew* to a sense, totally different from that of the Prophet, as it is explained by all the other sacred writers.

But as in these instances, we find *Matthew* accommodating the sense of Prophecies, to an agreement with the facts of his Gospel, so, on the other hand, we find him also accommodating his facts, to the sense of the prophecies. For example; He tells us, that *Jesus*, preparing to make a solemn entry into *Jerusalem*, ordered two of his Disciples, to go and bring to him an *Ass* and a *Colt* with her, which they would find tied together in a certain village: and they went, as *Jesus* commanded them, and brought the *Ass* and the *Colt*, and put on them their cloaths and set him thereon. All this was done, says he, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Prophet, saying; tell ye the daughter of *Sion*, behold thy King cometh unto thee meek, sitting upon an *Ass* and a *Colt*, the foal of an *Ass* [c]. The Commentators are puzzled here to determine, on which of the two *Jesus* rode; whether on the *Ass*, or the *Colt*; while the letter of the text seems to declare, that he sat upon them both; as some of the Antients, and of the moderns also have interpreted it; who solve the seeming absurdity, by supposing, that he first mounted the one, and then the other: the *Ass* denoting the Jewish, and the Foal, the Gentile Church; of both which he was now become the common Head [d]. But all this difficulty

[a] Hamm. on Matt. ii. 23.

[b] Omittamus earum Scripturarum fabulas, quæ apocryphæ nuncupantur — in his enim etsi invenitur aliqua veritas, tamen propter multa falsa, nulla est Canonica.

ca Auctoritas. August. de Civ. D. l. 15. c. 23.

[c] Matt. xxi. 5. Zach. ix. 9.

[d] Ad quod quæri utri Dominus jumento infederit, pullone an asinæ: alii ipsum

culty will vanish at once, if we take the account of this same fact, as it is given by the other Evangelists; who expressly say; that it was *the Foal or the Colt* onely, which *Jesus* sent for and rode upon: which is the most probable, as well from the nature of the thing, as from the concurrent testimony of three against one. But it is remarkable, that as *John* relates the same fact differently from *Matthew*, so he cites the same prophecy also as differently: and as, in his Gospel, he speaks of no more than *the Colt*, so in the prophecy he drops the mention of *the Ass*, and takes no more, than what relates to *the Colt* [a]. Whence it appears, that as *Matthew* adapted his fact to the letter of the prophecy, so *John* accommodated the letter of the prophecy to the reality of the fact.

The late Dr. Rogers, treating this very question, in one of his Sermons, affirms *the inspiration of the Apostles* to be a fundamental point in it: and, upon that hypothesis, gives two general solutions of all the objections, which are made to the application of these prophecies in the New Testament. 1st, "That such applications of them, tho' groundless or false in themselves, yet "being such, as were commonly received, and passed for current "among the Jews, might properly be urged to them by persons "inspired, as arguments ad hominem, upon their own concessions, without any impeachment of their inspiration. 2dly, "To bring the matter, as he says, to a short issue, he affirms, "that all such applications must necessarily be true, because they "were made *by persons inspired* [b]." The absurdity of which reasoning shews, to what contemptible shifts the most plausible writers will be reduced, when intangled with the defence of Systems, which are contradictory to plain facts.

ipsum utrique, prius uni deinde alteri infedisse respondent: atque in hac sententia est Augustinus de Conf. Evang. l. 2. c. 66. Alii de pullo duntaxat—& quod hic de utroque dicitur animante, ad Allegoriam transmittendum autumant, populi

Judaici & populi Gentilis. Zeger. in Matt. v. it. Casaub. in Matt. v. 7. it. Origen. Edit. Huet. p. 430. E.

[a] Joh. xii. 15.

[b] Rogers Sermon. p. 121. & p. 127.

When *Jesus* opened to the Jews these evidences of his mission, from their own Prophets, he admonished them *to search the Scriptures*, for the proof and trial of the truth of what he alleged [a]. The Apostles did the same; constantly exhorting them, to examine the Old Testament, that they might see, whether the testimonies, to which they appealed, were so or not: and the people of *Beræa* are particularly commended, for *searching the Scriptures more diligently, than the rest of the Jewish Converts* [b]. Now there could be no other meaning in this appeal to the Scriptures, on the one side, and this search of them, on the other, but to try, whether the particular testimonies, referred to by the Apostles, were really to be found in them, and in that very sense, to which they were applied. This is the foundation, on which Christ and his Apostles put the decision of this question: and it is the sole foundation, on which the Jews could rationally be convinced and converted to the faith of the Gospel. To affirm then, as the Doctor above mentioned has done, *that the Inspiration of the Apostles*, is the fundamental point, on which it depends, is in effect, to teach the contrary, to what Christ and his Apostles had taught; “that we
“need not trouble ourselves on this occasion with searching the
“Scriptures; and that the search of them is fruitless; for tho’
“the passages, referred to by the Evangelists, should not be
“found in them, which is the case of some, or found in a sense
“quite different from that, to which they are applied, which is
“the case of others, yet we must receive them all as infallibly
“true, because they are delivered by persons inspired.”

But to speak a word or two to each of his solutions. As to the first, it is utterly incredible, that persons inspired and specially commissioned by God, to propagate a particular doctrine, and supplied consequently with proofs the most authentic and demonstrative of it's truth, could on any account be reduced, to make use of trifling or equivocal arguments for the support of it; much less

[a] Joh. v. 39.

[b] Acts xvii. 11.

of such, as are false and groundless. Yet if this should in any manner be thought probable, in an occasional conference or debate with private persons, who had been trained and accustomed to that sort of reasoning, it is surely inconsistent with any notion of inspiration, to publish such arguments in writing, to all the world, and to all posterity, as the standing and perpetual proofs of the Christian doctrine, which they knew in reality to be no proofs at all, except to a few particular Jews, of those very times; and which, instead of doing service to religion, could serve only for matter of doubt and cavil to all succeeding times.

As to his second solution; if we should ask, how it appears, that the Apostles were actually inspired, in their interpretations of these prophecies? it will be answered, I suppose, because they wrought miracles [a]. And so far indeed I agree, that in the act of working miracles, they were certainly inspired with an extraordinary power; but when that act was over, and the special purpose of those miracles served, it is reasonable to believe, from the evidence of those facts, which I have elsewhere set forth, that they returned to the condition of fallible men.

Peter wrought many miracles, yet was charged afterwards by *Paul*, with acting in contradiction to the truth of the Gospel [b]. *Paul* wrought as many, yet in some cases disclames any inspiration [c]. *Barnabas* also wrought miracles, yet *Paul* and he quarrelled so far, as to part in great wrath from each other, about *Mark*, the Evangelist, whom *Paul* looked upon as a Desertor; *Barnabas*, as an honest man: where one of them, was surely mistaken, and both of them probably to be blamed [d].

If the Apostles indeed had called the Jews together, and wrought a miracle before them, in confirmation of any particular interpretation of Scripture, this reasoning would be just, and the miracle rightly alledged for the truth of such interpretation: but since this was not the case, the inference is certainly groundless, that miracles wrought at one time, prove the workers of

[a] Rogers Serm. 128.

[b] Galat. ii. 14.

[c] 1 Cor. vii. 12, 25. 2 Cor. xi. 17.

Gal. iii. 15.

[d] Act. xv. 39.

them, to have been infallible at all times. Nay the power of working miracles is so far from proving those, who are indued with it, to be perpetually inspired, or specially favored by God, that it does not prove them even to be good or honest men: since according to the constant testimony of the most esteemed and orthodox of the Primitive Fathers, it was possessed sometimes by wicked men, and Heretical Christians, corrupt both in faith and manners [a].

Let us now see, what use the enemies of Christianity have endeavoured to make of the prophecies applied by the Evangelists in the manner above specified; and what answer the truth of the case will oblige us to give to them. The Author of a *Discourse on the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*, asserts, “that the foundation of it is laid by the Evangelists, on the proof of this point, that the mission and character of Jesus were foretold by the Prophets; and that the validity of this proof depends intirely on the force of those particular prophecies which the same Evangelists have applied to the illustration of it, in their several Gospels [b].” Upon this hypothesis, he undertakes to shew, “that the Prophecies, so applied by them, do not at all relate to Jesus, in their proper and literal signification, but onely in a secondary, typical and figurative sense: and then by exposing this way of interpreting them, as equivocal, precarious, and incapable of yielding any rational conviction, he imagines that he has done, what he aimed at, and overturned the foundation of the Christian religion.”

And in truth, if we admit, that Christianity has no other foundation than what he has assigned to it, it might not perhaps be

[a] Ut intelligamus, quædam miracula etiam Sceleratos homines facere, qualia Sancti facere non possunt—

Quapropter aliter Magi faciunt miracula; aliter boni Christiani; aliter mali Christiani. August. Op. T. 6. p. 71.

Hoc adversus Hæreticos, qui probatio-

nem fidei suæ ex eo, si signum aliquod fecerint, arbitrantur. Hier. T. 4. p. 252. Vid. it. Chrysostr. T. 3. p. 64. D. it. T. 7. p. 376. D. Edit. Bened.

[b] See Disc. on the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion, p. 4, 5, 26, 27.

difficult

difficult for him to make good the rest : for upon that supposition, he has thrown many objections in our way, which it is scarce possible to get clear of. But while he fancied himself to be demolishing foundations, he was battering onely such parts of the edifice, as serve for it's ornament, rather than it's support. He professes to shew, that the *Prophecies cited by Matthew*, relate to *Jesus* onely in a figurative sense; and if he had shewn, that some of them did not relate to him in any sense at all, he would have done no more, than what some of the primitive Fathers, as well as modern Critics had done before him, without designing or doing the least hurt to Christianity.

Jesus, as it is said above, declared in general, *that Moses and the Prophets had testified of him* : but since the Evangelists did not think it necessary to give a precise account, or deduction of the several prophecies, which were alledged by him in proof of that declaration ; it is sufficient to take it, just as we find it ; as being true in general ; without thinking ourselves obliged to defend all the particular instances and applications, which were offered afterwards in support of it, by fallible men. It is *Jesus* onely, who is called *the Truth* ; and who alone was incapable of error : but he suffered his Apostles, as *Erasmus* says, to be drawn sometimes into mistakes, by a wrong judgement or affection, &c. [a]. These then being full of zeal for this new doctrine, taught them in general by their Master, yet wanting his unerring spirit, may probably be supposed, from an eagerness of explaining and illustrating it, to have strained it in some cases farther than it would bear ; in the same manner, as their Successors continued also to do more remarkably in the following ages ; who, full of the same zeal, yet without the same knowledge, stretched this argument of prophecy still farther, and discovered, as they imagined, many more instances of it applicable to *Jesus*, than ever the Evangelists and Apostles had dreamt of.

[a] Passus est suos ignorare quædam sectu. in Matth. ii. 6.
& labi, errareque alicubi judicio sine af.

REFLECTIONS on the Variations,

This therefore may serve for a general answer to all the objections, which are made to the prophecies of the Old Testament, as they are cited and said to be fulfilled in the New: that we are not obliged to receive all such applications of them, as infallible; that Christianity does not depend upon it; that whoever shall attack it on this article, will labor onely in vain, unless he can shew; that the mission and character of Jesus were not, in any manner or sense at all, prefigured in the Old Testament, or that Moses and the Prophets had no where testified of him. This is the single point, which can affect or hurt the cause of Christianity, and all the cavils, which fall short of this, may justly be slighted, as of no real weight in this question.

Mr. Whiston in defending *The Litteral Accomplishment of the Scripture-prophecies*, against the Author of *The Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*, has produced forty five prophecies from the Old Testament, which are all cited in the New, in proof of the *Messiahship of Jesus*, and which he declares to have been clearly and directly fulfilled, without the least pretence of any reply from that Author or any other whatsoever [a]. Now if any number of these, how small soever, are found to be as clearly accomplished, as he takes them to be, they are sufficient to support the authority of the Gospel, tho' all the rest were thrown aside.

But to say the truth, the grounds of our faith, in these later ages of the Church, do not lie in the particular interpretations of prophecies, made by men, who might be mistaken, and who, as Jerom says more than once, by trusting to their memories, in citing these very prophecies, were frequently mistaken in the words, and sometimes in the sense of them [b]. Nor is the evidence of prophecy

[a] See *The Litteral Accomplishment of Script. Prop. &c.* p. 1. — 19. See also *The Supplement, &c.* p. 1, 2.

[b] Sunt autem qui asserunt; in omnibus pene testimoniis, quæ de Veteri Testamento sumuntur, istiusmodi esse errorem,

ut aut ordo mutetur aut verba; & interdum sensus quoque diversus sit: vel Apostolis, vel Evangelistis non ex libro carpentibus testimonia, sed memorie credentibus, quæ nonnunquam fallitur. Hieron. in Mic. h. c. 5. Op. T. 3. p. 1531.

phesy so proper, in these days, *to convert men to the faith of Christ, as to confirm those, who have already embraced it* [a]: Serving chiefly, as St. Paul expresses it, *not to them, who believed not, but to them, who believe* [b].

Upon the first promulgation of the Gospel, while the conversion of the Jews was the principal object of our Savior's ministry, and afterwards of his Apostles, the argument of prophecy was, of all others, the best adapted to persuade and conquer the prejudices of that nation. But in preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, not acquainted with the Jewish Scriptures, nor tinctured with any Jewish prejudices, the testimony of it's miracles, and the purity of it's doctrines, were the most affecting proofs of it's divine origin. Yet when by the evidence of these, people had once received the Christian faith, and acquired a competent knowledge of it, they would then perceive, that the argument of prophecy, was a part also of the evidence, essentially necessary to complete the demonstration of it's truth. And on this foundation *Grotius* has built the best Apology for it, which has ever been published perhaps since the times of the Apostles.

To conclude; the chief purpose of these inquiries, is, to shew, that Christianity cannot be defended to the satisfaction of speculative and thinking men, but by reducing it to it's original simplicity, and stripping it of the false glosses, and systems, with which it has been incumbered, through the prejudices of the pious, as well as the arts of the crafty and the interested. One of the principal of these incumbrances, as far as I am able to judge, is the notion, which is generally inculcated by our Divines, concerning *the perpetual inspiration and infallibility of the Apostles and Evangelists*: a notion, which has imported such difficulties and

Hoc autem in omnibus pene testimoniis, quæ de veteribus libris in novo assumpta sunt Testamento, observare debemus: quod memoriæ crediderint Evangelistæ vel Apostoli; & tantum sensu explicato sæpe ordinem commutaverint; nonnunquam vel detraxerint verba vel addiderint. Id. in

Ep. ad Galat. c. 3. Op. T. 4. p. 253.

[a] Qualia in Prophetis multa, apta non ad convincendos incredulos, sed ad confirmandos, qui credere. Grot. Vot. pro pace. p. 104.

[b] 1 Cor. xiv. 22.

L

perplexities

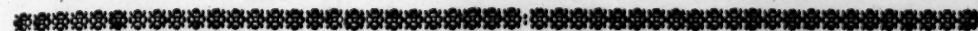
perplexities into the system of the Christian religion, as all the wit of man has not been able to explain : which yet will all be easily solved, and vanish at once, by admitting onely the contrary notion, *that the Apostles were fallible* : which is a sort of proof that generally passes with men of sense for demonstrative ; being of the same kind, by which *Sir Isaac Newton* has convinced the world, of the truth of his philosophical principles.

For this great Philosopher, by considering the real effects and productions of nature, and applying the causes of those, which were within the reach of sense and experiment, to all other phenomena of a similar kind, more distant and remote from the same trial, arrived at last, by a chain of consequences, at the discovery of that universal principle, by which the beautiful order of this visible world is regulated, and all the particular motions and activities of it's constituent parts perpetually directed ; which in every other hypothesis, had been perplexed with insuperable difficulties. *Descartes* took the contrary method : he first conceived the Idea of his universal principle, and by the force of his great wit and comprehension, made it correspond so aptly with the principal phenomena of nature, that it was received with great applause by the learned. But when it came to be examined afterwards with rigor, and was found irreconcilable to fact and experience, it gradually lost ground, and is now generally rejected by men of Science.

The case is the same in Theological, as in natural inquiries : it is experience alone, and the observation of facts, which can illustrate the truth of principles. Facts are stubborn things, deriving their existence from nature, and tho' frequently misrepresented and disguised by art and false colors, yet cannot be totally changed, or made pliable to the Systems, which happen to be in fashion ; but, sooner or later, will always reduce the opinions of men, to a compliance and conformity with themselves.

Wherefore, as we learn from dayly experience that prejudice, passion, want of memory, knowledge or judgement naturally produce obscurity, inaccuracy and mistakes in all modern writings
whatsoever ;

whatsoever ; so when we see the same effects in antient writings, how sacred soever they may be deemed, we must necessarily impute them to the same causes. This is what sense and reason prescribe, and what will be found at last the onely way of solving all the difficulties above intimated : whereas our Theorists, who come provided with systems which they impose as the Catholic rule, by which the Christian doctrine must be explained, are driven to such miserable shifts and absurdities, in their attempts to accommodate that rule to the particular facts of the Gospel, that, instead of clearing it of it's difficulties, they never fail to obscure and perplex it still more, till they render it incompatible with any consistent and rational belief.



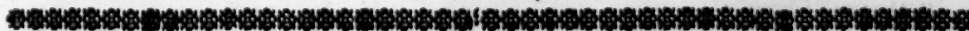
A N
E S S A Y
O N T H E
G I F T of T O N G U E S.

T E N D I N G

To explane the proper notion and nature of it, as it is
described and delivered to us in the Sacred Scriptures.

A N D

As it appears also to have been understood by the Learned both of
the antient and modern times.



AN

ESSAY

ON THE

GIFT OF TONGUES.

TENDING

To explain the proper notion and nature of it, as it is
described and delivered to us in the Sacred Scriptures.

AND

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AN
ESSAY
ON THE
GIFT of TONGUES.

THE gift of tongues, of which I am now going to treat, was first conferred by Christ on his Apostles, about ten days after his Ascension, in a public and solemn assembly of all the Disciples in Jerusalem, on the feast of Pentecost; as the account of it is delivered to us by St. Luke, in the following words.

Acts. ii.

1. *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*
2. *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*
3. *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*
4. *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*
5. *And there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.*
6. *Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.*
7. *And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, behold, are not all these, who speak, Galilæans?*

8. *And how hear we, every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?*
9. *Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,*
10. *Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Ægypt, and in the parts of Lybia, about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Profelytes,*
11. *Cretes and Arabians; we do hear them speak in our tongues, the wonderful works of God.*
12. *And they were all amazed and were in doubt, saying one to another, what meaneth this?*
13. *Others mocking, said, these men are full of new wine.*

From this narrative of the original collation of this miraculous gift of tongues, we find it to have been transacted in the same manner, which God is said to have used on other occasions, whenever he thought fit to strike the minds of men with an awful sense of his immediate presence. That is, by some extraordinary noise, as of a wind violently rushing, and shaking the place, and the appearance also of fire or flame suddenly flashing, to the amazement of those, who beheld it. "The manner of exhibiting this gift, says Dr. Lightfoot, was in tongues of fire, that the giving of the Holy Ghost, at the initiating of the Christian Church, might answer the giving of the Law, at the initiating of the Jewish: and so it did, both in time and manner; that being given at the feast of Pentecost, and in an appearance of fire, and so likewise this." But what is peculiar to the case before us, is, that this fire is said to have assumed the shape of cloven tongues, and to have sitten for some time in that form, on the heads of the Apostles. Hence we see, how the Painters, in all their descriptions of this story, have fixed upon the head of each Apostle, a flame of fire, split and divided into some resemblance of a cloven tongue. Yet that, which is mentioned in the text to have sitten upon each of them, is interpreted by some Critics, to relate, not, as it is commonly understood, to the figure of a cloven

cloven tongue, which appeared like to fire, but to the Spirit itself, with which they were then inspired, and which accordingly sat, or resided upon them for some time [a]. And this indeed seems very probable: for tho' the passage itself may appear at the first sight to carry a different sense, yet by considering all it's circumstances, we cannot reasonably collect any thing more from it, than that a fire from heaven flashed suddenly into the room, and filled it with an extraordinary light, which, like all other Phenomena of that sort, no sooner appeared, than vanished. For when, upon the rumor of this miracle, all the several nations, who dwelt at *Jerusalem*, flocked in crouds to the place, to inform themselves of the truth of it; if the forms of *cloven tongues* had continued to sit on the heads of the Apostles, that would have been the first thing, which must have struck them with wonder and surprize: but it is evident from the text, that the multitude saw no appearance of that kind: for tho' they are said to have been greatly amazed, it was not, at what they saw, but what they heard; viz. *a number of illiterate men, born in the midst of Galilee, addressing themselves freely to each different nation, in it's own proper language.*

The same inference may be drawn also from the effect, which this miracle had upon the natives of *Jerusalem*; who, not understanding the strange languages, which the Apostles were severally speaking, imagined them presently to be drunk, and utter-

[a] And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire: and it sat upon each of them; v. 3. which is thus interpreted by an eminent Critic, *Laurentius Valla*, in his Comment on the place. "They are mistaken, says he, who take the fire to have rested on the heads of the Apostles, when it is spoken of the Spirit, which sat upon them. Their tongues also are said to have been cloven and fiery, as it were, to denote that variety of languages, with which

they were indued; not that any fiery tongues really sat on their heads, as some will have it. [Vid. eund. ad loc.] St. *Jerom* also seems to allude to the same interpretation: "They were baptized," says he, so effectually by the Holy Ghost, that the whole room was filled, in which they were sitting, and the fire of the Spirit found it's wished for residence in them, and divided their tongues." Op. T. 4. par. 1. p. 178. Edit. Bened.

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ing some senseless jargon of their own, which wine onely had inspired; a notion, which they could not easily have entertained, if they had seen this celestial fire sitting at the same time on their heads: since so conspicuous a prodigy must needs have suggested a different reflection, and obliged them to acknowledge the finger of God in it. We cannot however think it strange, that fire flashing from heaven, and suddenly vanishing, should yield some resemblance of tongues to the eyes of the multitude: for this is no more, than what is natural, and what we may observe, in some measure, from every flame, that flashes from the clouds; and breaks itself of course, into a number of small and pointed particles, not remote from that shape. Hence, in the *Hebrew* language, we find the *flame, or fire, that devoureth the stubble*, called by *Isaiab, the tongue of fire*. Where the Critics observe, that a flame is so called by the Prophet, on the account of it's likeness to a tongue, both in it's color and shape; as being red, and tending towards a point [a]. So that the cloven tongues in the text, are to be considered as a mere *Hebraism*, not properly translated, which signifies nothing more, than a flame of fire burst into the room, whose broken and divided particles flashed over the heads of the Apostles, in the form, as it were, of fiery tongues [b]. But from all the circumstances already mentioned, it seems reasonable to suppose, that the fire itself, as soon as it had illuminated the room, in such a manner, as to indicate something miraculous and supernatural in it, immediately vanished, as well as the rushing wind, with which it was accompanied.

As to the nature of the gift, which was conferred in this extraordinary manner, it was a faculty of speaking new and strange languages, infused instantaneously by God into the Apostles, in order to convince all those different nations, then residing in Jerusalem, that they were authorised and commissioned by a divine

[a] **וּנְרָא**—Sicut stipulam devorat in locum.
lingua ignis. [Vulg. Isa. v. 24.] i. e. Flamma: quod ea lingue speciem præ se fert: nam rubet, & in acutiem tendit. Vatab.

[b] Διαμερίζομαι γλώσσαις ὡς πυρός. Acts iii. 3. Vid. Heinsii Exercit. ad loc.

power, to preach the Gospel of *Jesus*. But tho' they were all equally indued with the same faculty, and are all said to have given proofs of it in this same assembly; we are not to imagine, that they all spoke together, or at the same time; for that could onely create confusion: but that one or two of them perhaps addressed themselves by turns, to different parts of the company, and expounded to each in their own tongue, *the wonderful works of God*: according to that rule, prescribed afterwards by *St. Paul*, for the exercise of this very gift in all public assemblies, that those, who possessed it, *should speak singly, and in their proper course, one after another* [a].

St. Paul, who, as he himself tells us, was indued with this gift in it's fullest measure, and the best acquainted therefore with it's true value, ranks it in the lowest class of spiritual gifts; and as a thing of little or no worth; bestowed sometimes on persons, who do not seem to have understood the very languages, which they spoke, but wanted *an interpreter*, to explaine their own words to them: and he censures that zeal, which the Christians of those days expressed for it, as a *childish affection*, which prompted them to prefer, what was strange, and surprizing, to what was useful and edifying [b].

But the principal end and proper use of this gift, was to serve, on some solemn occasions, as a *sensible proof and illustrious sign*, that a divine influence rested on those, who were indued with it. Thus our Saviour, when he gave the first promise of it to his disciples, says; *these signs shall accompany those, who believe — they shall speak with new tongues, &c.* [c]. And *St. Paul* declares, that *tongues were given for a sign, not to those, who believe, but to those, who believe not* [d]. Which sign, as soon as it had served

[a] 1 Cor. xiv. 27.

[b] He, that speaketh in a strange tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him.— Wherefore let him, who speaketh in a

strange tongue, pray, that he may interpret.—ibid. v. 2, 13, 14, &c.—it. c. xii. 10, 28.

[c] Mar. xvi. 17.

[d] 1 Cor. xiv. 22.

that particular purpose, for which it was given, seems to have ceased and totally vanished.

There are two or three other passages in the *Acts*, which have some relation to this, which I am now considering: for when the disciples in *Jerusalem* were assembled together with *Peter* and *John*, and praying earnestly to God, to grant them courage to preach the word with boldness, and to perform signs and wonders in the name of *Jesus*, we read; that their prayer was no sooner finished, than the place was shaken, in which they were assembled; as a divine signal, and sure token, that their prayer was accepted. Thus also when *Paul* and *Silas* were praying to God in prison, there was suddenly a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken and its doors opened, and every one's bands were loosed [a]. We may learn likewise from the Old Testament, that it was usual with God, even under the Jewish dispensation, to employ these extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, as pledges or signs, either to insure the performance of some promise, or to demonstrate the collation of some benefit.—Thus *Samuel*, when he anointed *Saul* to be King over *Israel*, informs him of three signs, which would be given to him, as a proof, that the Kingdom was destined to him by God: the third of which is, that the Spirit of the Lord would come upon him, and he should prophesy, and be turned into another man: and when these signs, says he, shall come upon thee, then do, as occasion shall serve thee, for God is with thee [b]. Thus also, when *Moses* chose seventy Elders out of the people, to assist him in the administration of the government, God transferred his spirit from *Moses* unto those seventy, as a sign or

[a] *Acts* iv. 31. xvi. 26.

Grotius here observes, that these extraordinary movements were given, as signs of God's powerful interposition; and of some great thing to follow. [Vid. eund ad Loc.] And *Wolffius* also remarks, how the Gentiles were possessed with the same notion, that the presence of God was usually signified by some vehement motion or concussion of

the air and earth. [Vid. Comm. ad loc.]

Constat *Aventinæ* tremuisse cacumina *Sylvæ*,
Terraque subsedit, pondere pressa *Jovis*.

The earth shook, says the Psalmist, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God, even *Sinai* itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of *Israel*.

[b] 1 Sam. x. 2, 8.

token,

token, both to them and to the people, that they were selected to this office by divine appointment: and it came to pass, that while the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied and did not cease [a]. Hence flow those expressions, which we often meet with in *St. Paul*, of the seal, the earnest, the witness of the Spirit, given in the hearts of the believers [b]; as a sure pledge of God's peculiar favor. For as the seal of a ring, says *Grotius*, impressed on a bond, renders the whole firm and unquestionable, so the seal of God's spirit impressed on mens hearts, leaves no room to doubt of his paternal love of them [c].

I find but two other passages in the New Testament, where we have any particular account of the collation of this gift of tongues; which, in both of them, appears to have been conferred for no other purpose, than what I have already intimated, to signify to the company then assembled, the immediate presence and interposition of the Deity. For example; in the first of them, we read, that when *St. Peter*, by the command of God, had instructed *Cornelius* and his family, in the grounds of the Christian faith, the Holy Ghost fell upon all, who heard him, and they spake with tongues. But of what service could a variety of languages possibly be, among a few persons of the same family and probably of the same tongue, unless it were, to give a fresh proof to *Peter*, by this effect of his ministry, how powerfully he was supported by the divine assistance; and to shew the Gentile profelytes, that they were now admitted to a participation of the same privileges with the Jews, and to convince the Jewish converts at the same time, who accompanied *Peter* from *Joppa*, of their errors and prejudices, with regard to their antient rites; and that these extraordinary favors of heaven, were no longer limited to the circumcised onely, or to the seed of *Abraham*, but were now laid open and imparted in common to all nations: for, as the text informs us, they of the circumcision, who believed, were

[a] Numb. xi. 25.

Rom. viii. 16.

[b] 2 Cor. i. 22. v. 5. Eph. i. 13, 14.

[c] Vid. Grot. in Ephes. i. 13.

astonished,

astonished, as many as came with Peter, because, that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost, for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God [a].

In the other passage, we are told, "how *St. Paul* happened " to meet with certain Disciples at *Ephesus*, who had not received any other baptism, but that of *John*, nor ever heard of " any *Holy Ghost*; whereupon he baptized them in the name of " *Jesus*; and having laid his hands upon them, *the Holy Ghost* " came on them and they spake with tongues [b]." Now these were but twelve in number, all probably of the same country and language, as well as of the same faith: so that the gift of tongues could not be of any other benefit on this occasion, than to give a testimony to *St. Paul*, as well as to the men themselves, that the act, which they had been performing, was well pleasing to God.

St. Austin says, "that when Christ, after his Ascension, sent " down the Holy Spirit, which he had promised; *the most eminent and necessary sign* of his actual descent upon the Disciples " was, that every one of them should speak in the tongues of all nations [c]." *St. Chrysostom* also taking occasion to inquire into the meaning of *the kinds, or diversities of tongues*, which are mentioned so often by *St. Paul*, interprets it in the same manner and to the same sense. "Antiently, says he, every one, who believed " and was baptized, spoke presently with divers tongues, for the " sake of manifesting the Spirit within him. For as the men of " those days were infirm in the faith, and the spiritual gifts not " discernible to the eyes of the flesh, so a sensible gift was bestowed upon them, that the spiritual might be made manifest: " wherefore he, who was baptized, was enabled to speak, not " onely in our tongue, but in that of *the Persians*; in that of the " *Indians*; and in that of the *Scythians*; to the intent, that the

[a] Acts x. 45, 46.

[b] Ibid. xix. 6.

[c] Cujus venientis in eos, qui crediderant, tunc signum erat maximum & maxi-

me necessarium, ut unusquisque eorum linguis omnium gentium loqueretur. De Civ. D. l. 18. c. 30.

"unbelievers might learn, that he was indued with the Holy Ghost. This was a *sensible sign*, as it was heard by their bodily ears : and this *sensible sign* made the invisible grace of the Spirit evident to all : and this *sign* was called, *the kinds of tongues* [a]."

Hence the learned *Dodwell* declares, "that the Holy Ghost was generally bestowed on the new converts, at the time of their baptism, by some visible and external sign, called the *manifestation of the Spirit* ; by which the unbelievers themselves were assured beyond all doubt of the reality of the gift." In the number of which external signs, he reckons a *lambent flame*, and *the gift of tongues* [b]. But according to Dr. *Lightfoot*, these spiritual gifts or signs were not bestowed on all promiscuously, who were baptized, but on a certain number only, whom the Apostles were directed by the Holy Ghost to lay their hands upon, and whom God had appointed to be Preachers.

It is evident then, from the facts and testimonies already alleged, that the chief, or sole end rather of this *gift of tongues*, was, to serve as a *sensible sign* in that infirm state of the first Christians, that those, to whom it was vouchsafed, were under a divine influence, and acting by a divine commission. And this indeed may be collected from the account, recited above, of the first communication of it to the Apostles. For in such an assembly, as is there described, composed of several different nations, it is not reasonable to think, that this *diversity of tongues* was given to the Apostles, for the sake of converting those nations, by the mere force of such discourses, as they were enabled to make to each in their own tongue : for that would have required

[a] Vid. Chrysost. Oper. Tom. 3. p. 76. Edit. Benedikt.

[b] Spiritus ita baptizatis ut plurimum collatus erat, ut externo aliquo signo se manifestaret : quam Spiritus *φανερῶς*, appellabant—ita ut de Spiritus dono ne quid ipsi dubitare possint infideles. — Dissert. in

Iren. 2. p. 205.

In hoc signorum numero, ignis lambens. ib. p. 106.

Ad Spiritus *φανερῶς* pertinuisse donum illud linguarum, fidemque eo argumento factam apud illos, qui non ante crediderant. Ib. p. 110.

more time, than the nature of such a meeting could allow; nor could any speeches of that sort, made successively to different parts of the company, in different languages, be proper to persuade the whole, but to confound rather and perplex them. For if we suppose the Apostles, to have made each a separate discourse; to the *Parthians* for instance, in the *Parthian*; to the *Ægyptians*, in the *Ægyptian*; or to the *Romans*, in the *Latin* tongue; it is certain, that the greatest part of the Assembly, who did not understand those languages, would remain all that while amazed, and unedified; and this gift of tongues, if it had not been accompanied by some other power more persuasive and efficacious, would have exposed the possessors of it to ridicule only and contempt; agreeably to what *St. Paul* declares to the *Corinthians*; *if the whole Church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those, who are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say, that ye are mad* [a]?

Now all this is actually verified by the story before us; in which we find, that, as long as the Apostles were displaying this miraculous faculty, the greatest part of the company, who heard them by turns, speaking in their own languages, were struck with amazement, to perceive a set of rude *Galileans*, so learned and accomplished of a sudden, with all this variety of strange tongues; and *they were all in doubt, and asked one another, what could be the meaning of it*: while the rest, who understood nothing of any of those tongues, took all, which the Apostles were uttering, for the mere effect of drunkenness; till *Peter* observing, that their new gift had wrought it's proper effect, by imprinting a general persuasion of something very wonderful in it, and raising an impatience in the company to expect the event, rose up, and putting an end to all that diversity and dissonance of languages, began to expound to them, in an affecting and continued discourse, and in a tongue, which they all understood, how "what they had just seen and heard, was not the effect of wine and drunkenness,

[a] 1 Cor. xiv. 23.

" but

“ but of the wise counsil and power of God, who had now fulfilled the antient prædictions of his holy Prophets, concerning the character of the Messiah, and the nature of his kingdom ; which were all verified by the death, the resurrection and the ascension of that same *Jesus*, whom they had crucified [a].” By the power of which speech, he added about *three thousand souls* at once to the number of the faithful ; and exemplified the truth of what *St. Paul* has also testified, that it is better, to *speake five words in the Church with understanding, so as to instruct others by them, than ten thousand in an unknown tongue* [b].

This account of the gift of tongues, drawn from the clear testimonies of Scripture, plainly shews ; that it was not of a stable or permanent nature, but adapted to peculiar occasions, and then withdrawn again, as soon as it had served the particular purpose, for which it was bestowed. And hence we see the vanity of that notion, which is generally entertained about it, that from the first communication of it to the Apostles, it adhered to them constantly as long as they lived, so as to enable them to preach the Gospel to every nation, through which they travelled, in its own proper tongue. A notion, for which I cannot find the least ground in any part of sacred writ, but many solid reasons to evince the contrary. Agreeably to which the learned *Salmasius*, speaking of this same miracle, says, “ we are not to infer from it, that the Apostles, by receiving the gift of tongues, received a faculty of speaking all the several languages, which are commonly used in the world. For it is not probable, that the effect of it continued beyond that very day, or any longer, than the *cloven tongues* appeared to sit upon their heads : when those vanished the miracle ceased, and left them destitute of every other language, but that of their native country : for he thinks it certain, that they were not acquainted with any other, except what they might afterwards imperfectly acquire

[a] A&C. ii. 14,— 41.

[b] 1 Cor. xiv. 19.

“ by natural means, as they found occasion for it [a].” This, tho’ it be but little understood, and will not perhaps be well relished by the present pretenders to orthodoxy, is certainly the most probable account of the matter ; which I shall now endeavour to illustrate, as briefly and clearly as I am able, through the remaining part of this Essay.

If the language, which the Apostles made use of in propagating the Gospel by preaching or writing, had been inspired into them by God, we should expect surely to find it such, as is worthy of God ; pure, clear, noble and affecting, even beyond the force of common speech. *What man, says Cicero, is more flowing in his diction than Plato ? Jupiter himself, the Philosophers say, if he speaks Greek, talks in the same manner [b].* As they had no idea of any thing more excellent, so they imagined, that God himself would use the *Platonic* stile ; since nothing can come from him, but what is the most perfect in it’s kind : and this indeed is the universal sense of mankind, and the sole rule, which nature has given us, to distinguish the genuin productions of the Deity.

But if we try the Apostolic language by this rule, we shall be so far from ascribing it to God, as to think it scarce worthy of man ; I mean, of the liberal and the polite : for we shall find it in fact to be utterly rude and barbarous, and abounding with every fault, which can possibly deform a language. “ If any one contends, says *Erasmus*, that the Apostles were inspired by God with the knowledge of all tongues, and that this gift was perpetual in them ; since every thing, which is performed by

[a] Nec dicendum est ex eo miraculo— donum linguarum ita accepisse Apostolos, ut deinceps omnia loquelarum genera — caluerint & usurparint. Non enim verisimile est ultra illum diem durasse vim illam, quam Spiritus Sanctus iis efflavit, tantisper locum habituram, quamdiu lingue igneæ supra caput cujusque insedissee dicuntur. — Pro vero sane tenendum est, omnes fere

Christi discipulos & Apostolos—non aliam novisse linguam præter vernaculam, &c. Vid. Cl. Salmas. de Hellenistica. p. 252, 253, 254.

[b] Quis uberior in dicendo Platone ? Jovem quidem, aiunt Philosophi, si Græce loquatur, sic loqui. Cic. in Brut. p. 219. Edit. Lambin.

“ a divine power, is more perfect, according to *St. Chrysostom*,
 “ than what is performed either in the ordinary course of nature,
 “ or by the pains of man, how comes it to pass, that the lan-
 “ guage of the Apostles is not onely rough and unpolished, but
 “ imperfect also and confused, and sometimes even plainly solæ-
 “ cising or absurd ? for we cannot possibly deny, what the fact
 “ itself declares to be true [a].”

It would be tedious, to enumerate all the particular imperfec-
 tions which are charged to the sacred stile : whole books are
 written on the subject, and filled with the *barbarisms of the New*
Testament : and tho' some writers also, on the other hand, prompt-
 ed by a false zeal, have attempted to defend the *purity of scrip-*
tural Greek, yet all, which they have been able to shew, is, that
 certain particular words and expressions, are used there in the
 same sense and with the same propriety, with which they are em-
 ployed by the Classic writers : which is nothing more, than what
 is natural and necessary in all human compositions ; that many
 words, even of the most elegant kind, should be used in common,
 both by the worst and the best authors, who write in the same
 language. But it will be impossible to prove, that the order and
 construction of those words, and the general turn of the periods,
 which constitute, what we call the stile, is not truly barbarous
 and corrupt, and wholly remote from the ease and sweetness of
 the Classical compositions. Tho' “ the whole diction of the
 “ New Testament, says *Heinsius*, may justly be called *Hebraisti-*
 “ *cal* ; yet we now and then meet with a Greek expression, of
 “ which the best Greek writers would not be ashamed [b].”

It is somewhat curious to observe, that there was a contro-
 versy of the same kind among the antient Heathens, concerning
 the stile and composition of the *Delphic oracles*. For as those
 Oracles were delivered in verse, and the verses generally rude and
 harsh, and offending frequently, both in the exactness of meter
 and propriety of language, so men of sense easily saw, *that they*

[a] Vid. *Erasmi. Annotat. in Act. x.*

[b] *Exercitat. in Nov. Testament.*

could not be inspired by the Deity: others on the contrary, blinded by their prejudices, or urged by their zeal, to support the credit of the popular superstition, constantly maintained, that the verses were really beautifull, and noble, and worthy of God; and that the contrary opinion flowed from a false delicacy and sickly tast, which relished no poetry, but what was soft and sweet; and breathing nothing as it were but spices and perfumes. The dispute however seems to have been compounded, and a distinction found, in which all parties acquiesced, by allowing some *sort of inspiration, and divine authority to the matter of the Oracle*, but leaving all the rest, *to the proper talents and faculties of the Prophetess* [a]: who being tired at last, with the continual labor of versifying, began to utter her Oracles in prose, till the whole imposture fell by degrees into an universal contempt, and so finally expired [b].

We see the same prejudices still operating in the true, as they did of old in those false religions; and find many, who, not content with the allowed divinity of the Christian doctrine, must needs have the language also, in which it is delivered, acknowledged as divine. But as men of this turn, prepossessed with systems, and stiff in opinions, are apt to trust to any thing rather than their senses; and to be moved by authorities rather than by facts; I shall offer a few testimonies from some of the principal of the Antient Fathers, as well as of the modern Critics, to confirm the truth of what I am here asserting.

As for the Antients, whatever sort of inspiration they ascribed to the Apostles, they all allowed their language to have been intirely their own, and such, as we naturally expect from ignorant men, in the lowest state of life.

Justin Martyr tells us, “that there went out of *Jerusalem*, to preach the Gospel to the world, twelve men onely, and those

[a] Vid. *Plutar. De Pythia. Oper. T.*
2. p. 396, &c. Edit. Par.

[b] Sed cur isto modo jam Oracula Del-

phis non eduntur, non modo nostra ætate, sed jamdiu, jam ut nihil possit esse contemptius? Cic. *De Div.* l. 2.

“ wholly illiterate, and without any skill or knowledge of languages [a].”

“ The Apostles, says *Origen*, who were not ignorant, in what part they were infirm and deficient, declare themselves to be *Idiots in speech*, but not in knowledge [b].—For if the Scripture, says he, had been written with that elegance and politeness of stile, which was admired by the Greeks, it might have been suspected, that it’s success was not owing to the force of truth, but that men had been caught and charmed by the flowing ease and beauty of the language.”

Eusebius says, “ that the Apostles, tho’ perfectly pure in their lives, and adorned with every virtue, were yet *rude and barbarous* in speech, and trusting to the miraculous powers imparted to them by our Saviour, neither understood nor attempted to recommend the doctrines of their Master by any art or ornaments of language [c].”

St. Chrysostom, explaining the wonderful work of God, in converting the Gentile world, adds ; “ but by whom did he convert them ? by eleven men, illiterate, idiots, ineloquent, poor—without any force of words or rhetoric, or Science, to recommend them ; but Fishermen and Tent-makers, and of a strange language. For they did not speak the same tongue with those, whom they persuaded, but a foreign one, and different from all others, I mean the *Hebrew* [d].”

St. Jerom says, “ that they were indued with a power of working divers sorts of miracles, lest no body should otherwise believe a set of rustic, unlearned and ignorant men ; wanting every ornament of speech, to enforce their promises of the kingdom of heaven [e].”

[a] Apolog. 1. p. 59. Edit. Thirlb. Edit. Cantab. 1722.

[b] Comment. in Johan. p. 85, 86. Edit. Huet. & Philocal. c. 4.

[c] Hist. Eccles. 1. 3. c. 24. p. 116.

[d] Oper. Tom. 1. p. 575, 576. Edit. Bened.

[e] Oper. Tom. 4. p. 35. Ed. Bened.

St. Austin also observes, "that Christ chose for his Apostles, " men of mean birth, ignoble, ignorant and illiterate—and that " the divinity of their doctrine displayed itself the more illustri- " ously, in convincing the world by such contemptible witness- " fes; whose eloquence and persuasive powers lay in their wonderfull works, not in their words [a]."

The modern Critics likewise and Interpreters generally affirm the same thing; not merely upon the authority of those Antients, but from Facts and instances, observed and collected by themselves from the Apostolic writings [b].

Erasmus tells us, "that when the Apostles write in Greek, " they borrow much from their own Hebrew; as at this day, " men of little learning, when they talk Latin, always mix some- " what with it of their native tongue. For they did not learn " their Greek from the orations of *Demosthenes*, but from their " conversation with the vulgar, so it seemed good to the divine " wisdom, to use no help of human eloquence, towards drawing " the world into his religion: nor was the gift of tongues designed " to be perpetual: it was sufficient, that it was bestowed, as oft " as occasion required [c]."

Drusus and *Heinsius*, in their controversy with *Salmasius*, about the *Hellenistic Dialect* of the New Testament, declare it to be barbarous and impure, consisting indeed of Greek words, but full of *Syriasms*, and *Hebraisms* [d]. *Salmasius* on the other hand, tho' he allows no such dialect, as that, which they call *Hellenistic*, yet gives the same character of the stile of the sacred books, "that it was a " sort of Greek, compounded of various barbarisms; of *Latinisms*, " *Hebraisms*, *Syriasms*, and *Macedonicisms*; had many words in it, " that were not Greek, many *Alexandrian* and *Latin*, more still

[a] Oper. Tom. 7. p. 659.

[b] Atque hanc de Apostolorum sermone opinionem ipsa res nobis persuadet, etiam si non suffragaretur summorum viro-

rum auctoritas. (*Erasm.*) in Act. x. 38.

[c] *Erasm.* Ibid.

[d] Vid. *Fusus Ling. Hellenist.* p. 11, 12.

" merely

“merely barbarous, and numberless phrases from the Hebrew and the Syriac [a].”

These testimonies shew, what was the sense both of the antients and the moderns, concerning the general language of the New Testament; I shall procede therefore to open briefly in the next place, what has been observed and declared also by them, concerning the particular stile and skill in languages of each single Apostle or writer of those sacred books.

St. Matthew is said to have published his Gospel the first of them, and in the *Hebrew tongue*, for the proper benefit of his countrymen [b]. But we may probably suppose, that the reason of his chusing to write in that language, was his ignorance, or imperfect knowledge of the Greek. For the Greek tongue being then the common language of *Asia*, and even of *Judæa* itself, while the *Hebrew* was confined in a manner to the walls of *Jerusalem*, an *History*, compiled in *Hebrew*, could be of no great service, in spreading the light of the Gospel, till it was translated into some other tongue of more general use. This therefore was the real case of this *Hebrew Gospel*; which was scarce sooner published, than translated into Greek by an unknown hand, and the *Hebrew* copy thrown aside, and within a few ages after quite lost [c].

St. Mark, tho’ distinguished by a *Roman* name, was yet a Jew; and according to *Grotius*, was better acquainted with the *Hebrew*, than the *Greek*, in which he wrote, yet moderately skilled in them both, as his diction plainly shews [d].

[a] Vid. *Funus Ling. Hellenist.* p. 42. *N. B.* Those, who would see this point more fully treated, may consult *Father Simon’s* Critical History of the New Testament, where he will find many more authorities collected on the same subject.

[b] Primus omnium *Matthæus* est *Publicanus*—qui *Evangelium* in *Judæa* *Hebræo* sermone edidit; ob eorum vel max-

ime causam, qui in *Jesum* crediderant ex *Judæis*. *Hieron. Op. T.* 4, p. 3.

[c] Quod quis postea in *Græcum* translulerit, non satis certum est. *Ibid.* par. 2. p. 102.

[d] *Judæum* fuisse, & *ἑβραϊζοῦν* magis quam *ἑλληνίζοῦν*, quanquam sermonis utriusque mediocriter versatum, locutio evincit. *Grot. in Marc. i.*

St.

St. Luke, was a Physician of *Antioch*, and having had on that account a more liberal education than the rest, is observed to have written with more elegance and propriety. But it is probable, that he understood little or nothing of the *Hebrew*; since he constantly draws his citations of the Old Testament from the *Septuagint Version*, which *St. Jerom* seems to ascribe to his want of skill in the *Hebrew* [a]. But this excuse, as *Erasmus* says, will hardly satisfy those who believe every thing, that belonged to the Apostles, to have been bestowed on them by the Holy Ghost, and especially the gift of tongues [b].

St. John, as both the antients and the moderns with one voice declare, was, of all the Apostles, the most barbarous in his language, and ignorant of letters. "Being the son of a Fisherman" and himself also of the same trade, he might learn the law "when a child, says *Grotius*, as it was the custom with the Jews, "but had no sort of tincture, either of the *Hebrew* or Greek literature; and his Greek stile is plainly formed after the *Syriac* "idiom of that age [c]."

St. Paul, the most eloquent of all the Apostles, and, as he declares of himself, indued also with the gift of tongues more eminently than any man [d]: yet, as some of the Antient Fathers testify, was either wholly ignorant, or but very moderately skilled in the *Greek*.

St. Jerom, speaking of a certain person of distinguished learning, who affirmed him to have been wholly unacquainted with it, seems to

[a] Evangelistam Lucam tradunt veteris Ecclesiae tractatores, medicae artis fuisse scientissimum, & magis Graecas litteras scisse quam Hebraicas. Unde & sermo ejus—comptior est. Hieron. T. 3. p. 63, 64.

[b] Nam Lucam excusat Hieronymus, haud scio quam commode, quod magis calluerit Graecas litteras quam Hebraicas.--- Hanc excusationem non admittent, opinor, qui quicquid in Apostolis fuit, divini Spiritus peculiare donum esse volunt; praeci-

pue donum linguarum. in Matth. xiii. 14.

[c] Johannes Bethsaiensis, Piscatoris filius, piscator & ipse, legem quidem discere potuit puer, ut mos erat Hebraeis, ceterum nulla tinctus fuit aut Hebraica aut Graeca litteratura—hinc fit, ut supra ceteros Apostolos magna sit in Johannis dictione simplicitas, & sermo Graecus quidem, sed plane adumbratus ex Syriaco illius seculi.—Grot. in Johan. c. i.

[d] 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

censure that opinion as *ridiculous*: yet he himself, on other occasions, does not scruple to pass the same judgement upon him. "I still approve, says he, what I have often said before, that "when *Paul* declares himself to be rude in speech, he does not "declare it out of any humility, but from the real sense and consciousness of his own mind. For being an *Hebrew of the Hebrews*, and most eloquent in his own tongue, he could not express the recondite senses of the Gospel in a foreign language." In other places he takes notice of the *solæcisms and blunders* which this Apostle was apt to make in the construction of his words and sentences; "and how he employed *Titus*, as *his interpreter of the Greek tongue*, to assist him in writing his epistles:" for which reason, we find him extremely grieved and not able to take any rest, while *Titus* was absent from him; but filled again with joy and comfort, tho' in the midst of tribulations, when he met with *Titus* again in *Macedonia*, whither he went to seek him; being *the pipe and organ*, as *Jerom* expresses it, through which he preached the Gospel and sung to Christ [a].

Hence in his Epistles, through a want of use and skill in writing Greek, it was his custom, to scratch out the *last clause only, or salutation, in his own hand*, as the mark of their being genuine: thus in the Epistle to the *Galatians*; see, says he, *with what huge letters I have written this, with my own hand*. Which we are not

[a] Vir appime nostris temporibus eruditus, miror quomodo rem ridiculam locutus sit.—*Paulus*, inquit, *Hebræus erat*, & *Græcas litteras nesciebat*.—*Hieron.* Tom. 4. par. 1, 315.

Illud quod crebro diximus, *Et si imperitus sermone, non tamen scientia*, nequaquam *Paulum* de humilitate, sed de conscientie veritate dixisse, etiam nunc approbamus, &c. *ibid.* p. 204.

Iste igitur, qui *Solæcismos* in verbis facit, qui non potest hyperbaton reddere, sententiamque concludere, audacter sibi

vendicat sapientiam. *Ibid.* p. 348.

Hebræus igitur ex *Hebræis*, qui esset in vernaculo sermone doctissimus, profundos sensus aliena lingua exprimere non valebat. *Ib.* p. 309, 409.

Habebat ergo *Titum* interpretem. — Ergo contristatur *Paulus*, quia prædicationis suæ in præsentiarum fistulam, organumque per quod Christo caneret, non invenerat: perrexitque in *Macedoniam*, ut ibi inveniret *Titum*, &c. *Ibid.* p. 183. See 2 Cor. ii. 13. vii. 5, 6.

O

to

to understand, according to *St. Jerom*, as if he had written the whole Epistle himself, but that small part onely which follows [a]; and which those antients seem to interpret, as if he had said; see with what deformed and awkward letters, I have scrawled out this subscription, that from this attempt to do, what I am not able to execute without difficulty, you may collect the greatness of my zeal and love for you [b].

In writing also to the Romans, he made use of *Tertius*, as his scribe, to draw up the Epistle for him: whom the learned take to be the same with that *Silas*, so frequently mentioned in the Acts, as his companion and attendant; who, writing here to the Romans, uses his Latin name, *Tertius*, of the same import and interpretation, with his Hebrew name, שליש [c]. But some are apt to inquire, why *St. Paul* in an Epistle to the Romans, should chuse to write in Greek, rather than in Latin: to whom *Grotius* gives this answer; "because both the Apostle and his Secretary, tho' not perhaps wholly ignorant of the Latin, were yet better qualified, the one to dictate, and the other to write in Greek [d]." But whatever smattering either of them might possibly have of the Latin, it is certain, that they were both but slenderly acquainted with the Greek, as this very epistle demonstrates; which in the judgement both of the antients and the moderns, is strangely obscure and perplexed; abounding with hyperbatons; and employing the same words in various senses; and borrowing several of them from the peculiar dialect of Cilicia [e].

St.

[a] Et ne aliqua suppositæ Epistolæ suspicio nasceretur, ab hoc loco usque ad finem, manu sua ipse perseripfit, ostendens superiora ab alio exarata. Ibid. p. 314.

[b] Et quia necessitas expetebat, ut manu sua Epistolam subscriberet, contra consuetudinem curvos tramites litterarum, vix magnis apicibus exprimebat: etiam in hoc, suæ ad Galatas indicia caritatis ostendens, quod propter illos, id quoque, quod non

poterat, facere conaretur. Ibid. p. 315.

[c] Vid. Lightfoot, Horæ Hebraicæ. p. 883. in Cor. i. 1.

[d] Credo id eo factum, quod & ipse & Scriba ejus, *Tertius*, nomine, quanquam fortasse Latini sermonis non prorsus ignari, Græce tamen rectius ille dictaret, hic scriberet. in Rom. i. 1.

[e] Queritur *Origenes*, hanc interpretans Epistolam, Græcam dictionem esse perplexam,

St. Peter also is said to have had his scribes, as well as *St. Paul*, and in particular, to have employed *Mark the Evangelist*, as his *Greek* interpreter; and *St. Jerom* ascribes that difference of style, which is observed between his two epistles, to the different secretaries, whom he happened to use for each of them [a]. And this is supposed to have been the case of all the other Apostles: "for being all of them," says *Salmasius*, *Galilaans* and *Hebrews*, they had each their several companions and associates in the ministry of preaching the Gospel: who were partly *Grecians* born in *Syria*, and acquainted therefore with the *Syriac*; and partly *Syrians*, who, by conversing with the *Grecians*, had acquired the use also of the *Greek* tongue. These they employed as interpreters, to translate into *Greek*, what they dictated to them in the *Hebrew* or *Syriac*.—This, adds he, is expressly declared of some; not so well known of others, because not so declared; but probable of them all, because certain of some of them.—Hence all those *Syriasms*, which are spread over the whole text of the New Testament, and bear the clear marks of a translation, made, as it were, word for word [b]."

I shall onely add to these testimonies, a passage from *St. Chrysostom*, very apposite to the present purpose; in which that Father tells us, "how he once happened to hear a ridiculous dispute between a *Greek* and a *Christian*, on this very subject—the *Greek* maintained, that *Paul* was utterly illiterate; the *Christian* on the other hand, was simple enough to affirm, that he was more eloquent even than *Plato*. By which they, each of them severally, hurt their own cause. For if *Paul* was really the more learned of the two, the wonder would presently cease, how he came to get the better of *Plato*, and to

plexam, & hyperbatis obscuratam, & e Cilicum idiomate quædam parum Græca peregrinitatem resipere. *Erasmi* in *Rom.* i. 7. Vid. *Origen. Comment.* p. 429. Edit. *Huet. It. Hieron. T. 4. par. 1. p. 180.*

[a] Denique & duæ Epistolæ, quæ feruntur *Petri*, stylo inter se & caractere

discrepant, structuraque verborum. Ex quo intelligimus, pro necessitate rerum, diversis eum usum interpretibus. *Hier. ib. p. 183.*

[b] Vid. *Salmas. Comment. de Hellenist. p. 256, 258.*

“ draw all his followers to himself; since it would appear to be
 “ owing to the superiority of his talents, not to the divine grace:
 “ whereas if *Paul*, illiterate as he was, could vanquish the learn-
 “ ed *Plato*, such a victory was glorious, and the hand of God
 “ manifest in it. Wherefore he exhorts the Christians, whenever
 “ they heard any of the *Greeks* contemning the learning of the
 “ Apostles, to depreciate it still more, and instead of extolling
 “ the wisdom of *Paul*, to extoll rather all those, who were ad-
 “ mired among the Gentiles, for their learning and eloquence;
 “ and to declare their own Apostles at the same time, to be *bar-*
 “ *barous and unlearned*; for that was the onely way, to confound
 “ their adversaries in the end, and gain a noble victory over
 “ them [a].”

These facts and authorities manifestly prove, that the gift of tongues, was not of a lasting or perpetual kind, but given onely on certain important occasions, as an *illustrious sign*, to those first preachers of the Gospel, that a divine power continued to accompany them, and crowned their labors with success; and when this particular end was served, the gift itself was presently withdrawn. The same facts also demonstrate, that the languages, which the Apostles and Evangelists afterwards used, as well in their several writings, as in preaching the Gospel to foreign nations, were not the fruit of this gift, or of divine inspiration, but merely such, as they had been taught to speak from their birth, or had acquired by practice and conversation with those, among whom they resided: and that we may say with great truth of every one of them, what was said in particular of *St. Peter*, *Thou art surely a Galilaean, for thy speech betrayeth thee* [b].

Since the Apostles then cannot be supposed to have received their language from heaven; it will be asked perhaps, by what human means they could acquire that knowledge of the *Greek*, of which they appear to have been possessed. But this will admit a very easy solution, if we recollect, what all the learned al-

[a] Vid. Chrysost. Op. T. 3. p. 76.

[b] Matt. xxvi. 73.

low, that the *Greek* language prevailed and flourished in common use, through the greatest part of the eastern world. *The Latin tongue is confined indeed within narrow bounds, says Cicero, but the Greek is read almost by all nations* [a]. Hence flowed that custom, so common with the sacred writers, of dividing all mankind into *Jews and Greeks* [b]. But what is most to our purpose; we find the *Greek* tongue to have been generally current also in *Judæa* and in the City of *Jerusalem* itself; in which there seem to have been several *Greek Synagogues* [c]. The province of *Galilee* also was divided between *the Jews* and *the Greeks*; and *Capernaum* the Metropolis was in the *Grecian* division [d]. The city of *Gadara* too, where *Jesus* sent *the Legion of Devils into the Swine*, and *Cana* likewise, where he wrought his first miracle, were under the same jurisdiction [e].

Now it was in these very parts, where our Saviour principally resided, and gathered all his Apostles: two of whom have *Grecian* names, *Philip* and *Andrew*, and a third, two different names, *Thomas* and *Didymus*, the one *Hebrew*, the other *Greek*; by the first of which he was called among the Jews, by the second, among the Gentiles [f]. It is certain also, that in *Jerusalem*, a great number of the first converts were *Greeks*: insomuch that the Apostles found it necessary, to select *seven of the most eminent Disciples*, to be set apart for the particular business of providing for the maintenance of the *Grecian widows*. *And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch* [g]. Where it is remarkable, that all the seven have *Grecian* names, and were consequently of *Grecian*

[a] Orat. pr. Archia.

[b] Acts xiv. 1. xviii. 4. xix. 10, &c.

[c] Acts vi. 9. Vid. Lightfoot, p. 929.

[d] Galilæa Gentium — in qua est Capernaum Galilææ Metropolis. Zeger. in Johan. iv. 43, 44.

[e] Est enim Cana, in Galilæa gentium,

oppidum, quod Hieronymus in Hebraicis locis testatur ætate sua adhuc extitisse. Erasmi. in Joh. ii. 1. De Gadara. Vid. Sculteti Exercitat. Evangel. l. 2. c. 49.

[f] John xi. 16.

[g] Acts vi. 5.

families : and as the last of them is particularly distinguished by the character of a *profelyte of Antioch*, so it is probable, that the rest were natives of *Jerusalem* : to whom we may add *Nicodemus*, a person of senatorian rank, and a member of the great *Sanhedrim*, yet, as we may collect from his name, of *Greek* extraction also [a]. From all which we see the reason, of what the learned Dr. *Lightfoot* declares, “ that the *Greek* language was “ in such use and honor with the Jewish nation, that it was pre- “ ferred to all others, and held by the Doctors themselves, in “ the same rank with their native tongue [b].”

To conclude then : it is reasonable to imagine, that the Apostles, who were born and bred, and spent their whole lives among those, who *spoke Greek*, might acquire a moderate knowledge of that tongue, even from their childhood. For this is natural and common to the most illiterate, to catch some imperfect use of a foreign language, which they hear constantly spoken by all around them. But if we suppose them, to have made but little or no acquaintance with it, in their younger years, it is probable, that the necessities of their Apostolic function, and the task of preaching the Gospel, might induce them to apply themselves to the acquisition of it, even in their advanced life. This I find to have been the opinion of *Erasmus*, who says ; “ it “ is not strange, that when *Ægypt*, *Syria*, *Cilicia*, and all the “ lesser *Asia* talked *Greek*, the Apostles should acquire the know- “ ledge of it without a miracle, when they lived so many years “ among those who spoke it. Nor were the Gospels presently “ written by them. A stranger, who lives in *France*, will learn “ to speak *French* in a year’s time, tho’ he knew nothing of it “ before : and can we wonder then, that the Apostles, in so “ many years, should gain a moderate skill in the *Greek* [c].

Salmasius also was of the same opinion, that the greatest part of the Apostles learnt the *Greek* tongue but very late ; and not

[a] John iii. 1.

[b] Lightf. Hor. Hebr. in Matt. i. p.

253. It. Chron. Tempor. p. 110.

[c] Eras. in Acts x. 38.

till they were commanded to preach the Gospel to all nations [a]. *Grotius* likewise declares in particular of *St. John*, "that he had "no tincture either of the *Hebrew* or *Greek* litterature, but might "perhaps have gained some share of each, when he was old, in "*Asia*, where he spent the greatest part of his days to an extreme "age; partly in the *Isle of Patmos*, to which he was banished, "and partly at *Ephesus*, both before and after his banishment, as "all the antients testify."

This opinion therefore of those great and learned men, that the *Apostles* acquired their *Greek* knowledge chiefly in their later years, seems on the whole, to be the most probable, and most agreeable also, to what the antient writers have delivered concerning them. There were but two of the whole number, who wrote any Gospels, *Matthew* and *John*: of whom *Matthew*, as it is said above, wrote his Gospel in *Hebrew*, as having but little or no knowledge of the *Greek*; and *John* did not write his *Greek* Gospel, till he was extremely old, and had lived many years in *Asia*. The other two Evangelists, *Mark* and *Luke*, are declared by all, to have been the companions and interpreters of the Apostles, *Peter* and *Paul*; and were not therefore, so properly the authors, as the Scribes onely of those Gospels, which pass under their names [b].

[a] Grot. in John i. 1.

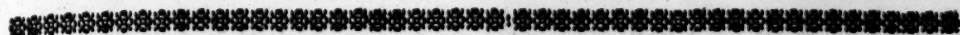
[b] Μάρκος ὁ μαθητὴς καὶ ἑρμηνεύτης Πέτρου, καὶ αὐτὸς τὰ ὑπὸ Πέτρου κηρυσσόμενα ἐγγράφως ἡμῖν παραδίδωκε. Καὶ Λουκᾶς δὲ ὁ ἀκόλουθος Παύλου, τὸ ὑπ' ἐκείνου κηρυσσόμενον εὐαγγέλιον ἐν βιβλίῳ κατέθετο. Iren. Adv. Hæres. l. 3. c. 1.

We are told also by some of the Antients, that when *St. Paul*, in his Epistles, speaks of *my Gospel* and *our Gospel*, [2 Tim. ii. 8. 2 Theff. ii. 14.] He means the Gospel of his Secretary and Interpreter, *St. Luke*. God bearing them witness with signs and wonders, according to his own will. Heb. ii. 4.

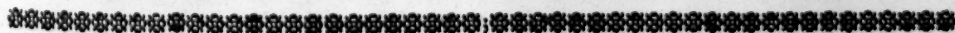
Offenditur Galatas—dona habuisse virtutum—& tamen post tanta (quia forsitan gratiam discernendorum Spirituum non habebant) a falsis Doctoribus irretiti sunt. Observandum etiam quod operari virtutes dicantur in his, qui non tenent Evangelii veritatem, &c. Hier. in Galat. c. 3. Op. T. 4.

Semel duntaxat legimus Apostolos novis linguis loquentes — quanquam vero propius est Apostolos id temporis unica lingua fuisse locutos, ac virtute divina factum, ut ab omnibus æque intelligerentur, Erasmi, in Act. x. 38.

SOME



SOME SHORT
R E M A R K S
ON A
STORY told by the ANTIENTS,
CONCERNING
ST. *JOHN* the EVANGELIST,
AND
CERINTHUS the HERETIC;
AND
On the use, which is made of it by the Moderns, to
enforce the Duty of shunning Heretics.



THE HISTORY OF THE

SOME SHORT

REMARKS

ON A

STORY TOLD BY THE ANTIENTS

CONCERNING

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

AND

CELESTINE THE HERMIT

BY

THE AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF THE
LIFE OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

THE HISTORY OF THE

SOME SHORT

REMARKS

ON A

STORY told by the ANTIENTS, &c.

THE story, which I am going to examine, is told by *Irenæus* in the following manner ; “ that there were some, “ who had heard *Polycarp* relate, how *St. John*, the “ disciple of our Lord, going one day to the public bath in “ *Ephesus*, and finding the Heretic *Cerinthus* in it, started back “ instantly without bathing, crying out ; let us run away, lest “ the bath should fall upon us, while *Cerinthus*, the enemy of “ truth, is in it [a].”

This story is applied by *Dr. Berriman*, in one of his Sermons, to inforce the duty of *shunning Infidels and Heretics* : and by *Dr. Waterland*, to recommend a practice, which he warmly presses upon all Christians, of rejecting from their society and communion, *all the impugnors of fundamentals* [b] : And it is sure to be thrown in our way, either from the pulpit or the press, by all angry Divines, as oft as they find occasion, to inflame the people against an Antagonist, whom, through zeal or heat of controversy, they are disposed to treat as an adversary to the Christian faith.

[a] Καὶ εἶπεν οἱ ἀκηκοότες αὐτοῦ, ὅτι Ἰωάννης, &c. *Iren.* l. 3. c. 3. Doctr. of the Trin. p. 105, 127. it. *Berrim.* On shunning Heret. p. 352.

[b] See *Dr. Waterl.* Import. of the

REMARKS on the Story

Since this story then, as it is commonly applied, naturally tends, to excite prejudices, and uncharitable averfions in the minds of men, and is confidered generally by zealots, as an Apostolic rule and precedent, for the exercife of all kinds of rudeness towards thofe, who differ from them in matters of religion, I cannot but think it of ufe to the public quiet, to inquire into the real ftate of it, and not to fuffer it to have any other credit or influence, than what is ftremely due to it : for in that great uncharitablenefs, which reigns among all the Sects of Chriftians in thefe days, there is no occafion to ranfack antiquity, for any additional motives of strife and mutual hatred.— I fhall confider therefore,

1ft, What objections may reasonably be offered to the truth of it, as well from the nature of the evidence, as the matter of the ftory itfelf.

2dly, Shall fhew, that tho' we allow it to be true, it cannot juftify the ufe, to which the Docters abovementioned, and many others have applied it.

1. As to the evidence of the ftory, it refts on the fingle testimony of *Irenæus*, and that given to us, at fecond hand onely, or from hearfay : for he does not fay, that he received it himfelf from *Polycarp*, tho' when young he had feen and converfed with him, but that *some of Polycarp's difciples* had heard him relate it; of which number there were many, who had converfed with him more familiarly, and frequently than *Irenæus*. Since he received it then from certain perfons unknown, who received it from *Polycarp*, who received it from *St. John*, there is room enough to fuppofe, that he might poffibly be deceived in it: which confidering the character of the man, and of the age, wherein he lived, can hardly be thought an unreafonable fuppofition.

But if we fhould allow, what many are apt to infer from this paffage, that *Irenæus* meant here to fignify that it was he himfelf, who heard the ftory from *Polycarp*; we are then to confider, what degree of credit may be due to his testimony. But this I have already confidered at large in a former treatife : in which

I have shewn, that tho' of all the Fathers, whose works now remain to us, he was the most diligent collector of *Apostolic traditions*, and had gathered them, as he affirms, *from the mouths of antient men, who had conversed with the Apostles themselves*; yet in every single instance of them, which he has particularly recorded, and peremptorily attested, he was either deluded himself, or has willfully deluded others, by a false and forged pretence of Apostolic authority. Among many examples, which I have there produced in the support of this charge, the following one will sufficiently teach us, how far we may depend upon his fidelity.

There were certain Heretics in those days, with whom *Irenæus* was disputing, who allowed but *one and thirty years* to our Saviour's life, and the *last of them alone* to his ministry: in contradiction to whom, *Irenæus* roundly affirms, *that our Saviour actually lived to an old age, and was fifty years old at least at the time of his death*: for which he alledges the *unanimous testimony of all the old men, who had lived with St. John in Asia, and received this account from him*; *some of whom, he says, had seen the other Apostles also, and heard the same from them all, and bore witness accordingly to the truth of it* [a]. Now it is not possible, that any tradition can be more authentically delivered than this, by one of the most venerable Bishops of the primitive Church, who lived within a few years after the Apostles themselves; yet it is certain, as the warmest admirers of antiquity in general, and of *Irenæus* in particular, must own, that neither *St. John*, nor any other of the Apostles, could ever declare such a story to any one; and that the whole therefore must be a mere fiction, either of those antient men, who had conversed with the Apostles, or of *Irenæus* himself, who pretended to have heard it from them, as being utterly inconsistent with the history of the Gospel.

[a] Iren. l. 2. c. 39. Quidam autem sis audierunt & testantur de hujusmodi re-
eorum non solum Joannem, sed & alios latione.
Apostolos viderunt, & hæc eadem ab ip-

But

But the Gospel was then onely in a few hands ; and *Apostolic tradition* the shortest way of silencing those Heretics ; being an argument of the greatest weight with those, who believed it, and what could not easily be confuted by those, who did not. The pious Editor of *Irenæus's* works makes the following remark upon the place ; “ *Irenæus*, says he, affirms in express words, that “ Christ continued to teach beyond *the fortieth*, or even *the fiftieth* “ *year of his age* ; which he endeavours to confirm by texts of “ Scripture, and by reasons also, tho’ weak ones, which the “ common judgement of the Church has rejected. We ought “ however to judge candidly of the blessed Martyr, who, *by an* “ *impetus of confuting the Heretics*, was carried into the contrary “ extreme : a case, which, as it is manifest, has frequently hap- “ pened to the most holy and learned men [1].” But since *Irenæus's* whole life and writings were peculiarly devoted to the confutation of Heresy, what is it, that the most candid can possibly judge on this occasion, but that the same *impetus of confuting them*, which carried him beyond the truth in one case, would carry him the same length in another, and prompt him to use every argument, which could promote so good a cause ?

This suspicion will be confirmed, not onely by the conduct of *Irenæus* in other similar cases, but by the matter of the story itself, which on many accounts seems to imply a behaviour unworthy of the character of *an Apostle* ; to whose dignity it would have been more agreeable, instead of running out of the Bath himself, to have driven *Cerintus* out before him. *Resist the Devil and he will flee*, is an injunction given to every private Christian : and it is much more the part of an Apostle, to resist and disarm an Heretic ; whereas so precipitate a flight betrays fear and diffidence, and gives an occasion of triumph to the Adversary.

The reason also, said to be given by him for his flight, is childish and superstitious : *lest the bath should fall, because Cerintus*

[a] Disertis verbis affirmat Christum ul- simum annum docuisse, &c. Vid. Fevar-
tra quadagesimum, aut etiam quinquage- dent. Not. 4. in Iren. ibid.

was in it. As if it had been usual with God, to exert his judgments in that manner on notorious sinners, by burying them under the ruins of walls and houses: a notion, which seems to be expressly discouraged and exploded by Christ himself [a]. Or if there was any cause to apprehend, that God would take so extraordinary a method of punishing the Heretic, there was a greater still, to be assured, that he would provide at the same time, in some way as extraordinary, for the safety of the Apostle: it being weak to imagine, that when he had spared the life of so profligate an enemy to that day, he should be in such haste at last to destroy him, as to involve his old and faithful servant in the same ruin.

The conduct of the other Apostles towards the profess'd adversaries of the Gospel was quite contrary to this of *St. John*, as we find it described in the History of their Acts; where we read how *Peter* rebuked and confounded the Prince and Leader of all Heretics, *Simon Magus*, who had bewitched the people of *Samaria*, by his Sorceries, and was revered by them as a Deity. And if any credit be due to Ecclesiastical History, we are there told, that when the same *Simon* was playing his magical tricks again in *Rome*, in defiance and opposition to the Gospel, and, by the help of his familiar Dæmons, was flying briskly in the air, *St. Peter*, by the force of his prayers, brought him down from the sky, with so precipitate a tumble; that he was dashed to pieces by the fall, in the sight of all the people. Thus, when *St. Paul* likewise was opposed and obstructed in preaching the Gospel, by another Sorcerer and false Prophet, called *Elymas*; he first reproached him sharply for his Diabolical practices, and then, *in the name of the Lord, struck him instantly blind.* And this is the conduct, which one would have expected from an Apostle, upon an encounter with *Cerintbus*, the chief Heretic and adversary of the Gospel then living, that he would either have confuted and put him to shame by the force of his reasoning, or confounded

[a] Luke xiii. 1.

him.

him by some act of that extraordinary power, with which he was indued from above.

But *St. John*, as *Dr. Waterland* declares, *was all love, meekness, and charity* [a]: and this indeed is said to have been his peculiar character, above that of the other Apostles. And we are told of him by *St. Jerom*, "that in his extreme age, when he used to be
 " carried to the Church by his disciples, it was his custom, to
 " do nothing more, than repeat this single exhortation; *my little*
 " *children, love one another*: and when the people grew tired with
 " hearing nothing else from him but that one precept, and asked,
 " why he continued always to repeat the same thing; he an-
 " swered; *it is a saying worthy of John, and a precept of our*
 " *Lord, and if you practise this alone, it is sufficient* [b]." The same doctrine, of love, charity, and mutual benevolence, was eminently propagated also by his two principal Scholars, *Ignatius, and Polycarp*: *what thanks are due to you*, says *Ignatius*, *if you love only the good disciples? you must subdue rather the more pestilent sort, by your mildness and gentleness* [c]. And *Polycarp* speaking of one, who had fallen away from the faith, says; *be moderate on this occasion, and look not on such as enemies, but call them back, as suffering and erring members* [d].

How much more amiable then, and agreeably to his proper character, is this same Apostle represented in another story, delivered also by the antients, concerning his painfull and affectionate pursuit, of the *Captain of a band of robbers*; whom he followed into the mountains, and by his affectionate and paternal remonstrances, brought back from the head of his crew, and restored to the Church [e]? yet from this charitable and benevolent act, *Dr. Waterland* has contrived to draw a most perverse and pernicious inference, *that by flying from the Heretic and run-*

[a] See Import. of the Doctr. of the Trin. p. 152.

[b] Nihil aliud per singulas solebat proferre collectas, nisi hoc, *Filioli diligite alterutrum*, &c. Hieron. Op. T. 4. p. 314.

[c] Vid. Ignat. Ep. ad Polycarp. §. 11.

[d] Vid. Polycarp. Ep. ad Philip. §. 11.

[e] Vid. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c.

ning after the robber, he shewed, how much more he detested Heresies, than common immoralities [a].

It is observable likewise, that this story is related with no small variation by the Antients themselves. *Epiphanus* tells it more than once, not of *Cerintus*, but of another Hæretic, called *Ebion*: and why might not both of them, says the Editor of *Irenæus*, be found together in the bath at the same time? *Baronius* makes the same supposition, to reconcile the two Fathers; while others suppose, that *Cerintus* and *Ebion* are but different names of the same person [b]: Yet *Tertullian* expressly distinguishes them, and calls *Ebion* the Successor of *Cerintus* [c]. But *Mr. Tillemont* solves the matter more judiciously by remarking, that there is no need of such conjectures, because it is common with *Epiphanius* to make blunders in history; who has added, he says, several other particulars, both trifling and improbable, to this very story. One of the particulars, which he has added, is this; that *St. John* had never before made use of the public baths, till he was sent thither on this occasion by a divine inspiration, to give this open testimony of his detestation of Heresy. Some of the other Fathers as well as *Epiphanius*, declare *Cerintus* to have been the disciple of *Carpocrates*, who was not in being, as the Chronologers tell us, till after the death of *St. John*; and if so, this whole story must of course fall to the ground.

The Moderns also, in their turn, have added some embellishments to the same story. *Fevardentius* in his notes on this passage of *Irenæus*, says, that *St. Jerom*, in his treatise against the *Luciferians*, affirms, that immediately after the retreat of *St. John*, the bath actually fell down and crushed *Cerintus* to death. Yet there is not the least intimation of any such fact, as *Dr. Grabe* observes, either in that, or any other part of *St. Jerom's* works [d]. Another writer with as little truth, asserts the same thing, on the authority of venerable *Bede*; and some also appeal to *Polycarp*,

[a] See *Waterl.* ibid. p. 152.

[b] Vid. *Fevardent.* Not. 2. In *Iren.* ibid. & *Baron.* ad Ann. 74.

[c] Vid. *Oper.* p. 252. B.

[d] Vid. *Iren. Oper. Edit.* Oxon. p. 204. Not. 2.

as the voucher of it; and all of them take occasion, to moralize upon it with great gravity, as an instance of God's judgements upon Hæretics [a].

From these remarks upon the story, I shall procede to the lesson, which is drawn from it by the two Doctors above mentioned, and shew,

2dly, That, tho' we allow the fact to be true, it will not justify the use, to which they have applied it.

Now the constant use, which is made of this story, is to demonstrate the duty of *shunning and affronting Hæretics*; of *denying them the common offices of civility*; *treating them as persons excommunicated, and detestable in the eyes of God and man*: and this pressed upon all Christians by the authority and example of St. John [b].

But I would ask, whether a behaviour of this sort be agreeable to the ordinary temper and spirit of the Gospel, or of that *Jesus*, who came into the world, as a *Physician to the sick*; and in that character, fought out *the Publican*, and *the Sinner*, for the opportunity of healing them; and preferred the *Hæretical Sad-*

[a] *Monfr. Bayle*, who mentions this story with all these particulars, makes the following remark upon it. "Observe, says he, the progress of it. *Irenæus* was probably the first who published it, and contented himself with relating barely, what he had heard. But those, who came after him, finding his narrative too simple and naked, added some embroidery to it. They fancied it dishonorable to the memory of the Apostle, to have it believed, that he had ever made use of the public baths: they affirmed therefore, that he had never done it before, and was sent thither on this occasion, by the express command of heaven. It was necessary in the next place, to find out a good

reason for so particular an inspiration: and a reason was presently found; viz. the importance of letting the faithful know, what an horror they all ought to conceive against the enemies of the truth; and how the divine justice was always ready to exert itself by some exemplary severity against an Arch-Heretic. Lastly, as it might seem indecent, for St. John to be thought liable to any vain and unnecessary fear, so it was found convenient to suppose, that the Heretic, with whom he refused to bath himself, was crushed to pieces by the fall of the house." Vid. Artic. Cerinthus Not. D. in Dictionaire.

[b] See Import. of the Doctr. of the Trin. c. 4. p. 122, &c.

douce,

ducee, and the Schismatical Samaritan, to the fierce Zealot, and the Orthodox Pharisee? No, it is so far from being conformable to the ordinary rules of Christian duty, that it was copied, as Dr. Berriman himself owns, from the Jewish institutes [a]: as if it flowed from that principle, by which this same Apostle, while yet raw and unacquainted with the benevolent temper of his new religion, was calling down fire from heaven on the Samaritans, after the example of Elias, and was reprov'd accordingly by our Lord, for not knowing what manner of spirit he was of [b].

If I should ask these Gentlemen also, what it is, that they mean by the word *Hæretic*; we should find in the end, that they meant nothing more by it, than one, who differed from them in any article of religion, which they held to be important. Dr. Waterland calls him, an open Impugner of fundamentals, and labours to prove, that we ought not to hold communion with any of that character [c]. And should we ask once more, what are these fundamentals? he would refer us without doubt in the first place to the doctrine of the Trinity: whence I have drawn the testimonies above ascribed to him. The importance of which makes the subject of that very book; and this doctrine indeed is held so fundamental by the Papists, that the disbelief of it, tho' but secretly entertained by a Priest, is declared to annul the whole efficacy of his ministry, and of the Sacraments themselves, not onely to himself, but to all others, how innocent soever, to whom he should happen to administer them. But among Protestants, the distinction of fundamentals, has been constantly applied to those doctrines alone, which are clearly and precisely delivered in the holy Scriptures: and how far this character will suit with the doctrine of the Trinity, I leave to others to determine: yet this I think, we need not scruple to say, that it is no where expressly declared by any of the earliest Fathers; and as the most learned among the Papists assert, was never affirmed or taught by the Church, before the Council of Nice [d].

[a] Sermon. Vol. 2. p. 351.

[b] Luke ix. 55.

[c] Import. &c. c. 4.

[d] See Chillingw. Pref. §. 18, 33.

Irenæus, speaking of the Mosaic distinction of animals into clean and unclean, says; "the law foretold all these things figuratively, by animals denoting men: those which divide the hoof and chew the cud, it pronounces clean: those, which do neither, unclean. Who then are clean? those, who go on firmly, believing in the Father and in the Son. For this is the firmness of those, who have the double hoof [a]." Hence we see, that the fundamental doctrine, or the firmness of the Christian faith, in this early age was, to believe in the Father and in the Son. In the ages next following, many different opinions successively prevailed, and were held orthodox in their turns: but as soon as the *Arian* controversy began to disturb the peace of the Church, *Constantine the Great* wrote a letter, in common to *Arius* and *Alexander* Bishop of *Alexandria*, the opposite chiefs in the dispute, in which he treats the whole question, "as vain, foolish and impertinent; as a dispute of words without sense, which none could explain, nor any comprehend; as the fruit of idleness and leisure misemployed, which no way affected the sum of religion; and that to quarrel about such trifles and subtleties, was childish, and below the gravity of Priests; wherefore he earnestly exhorts them to put an end to so silly a contest, productive of nothing but quarrels and blasphemies among the people; and to return to their former friendship and communion with each other."

This letter was sent by *Hosius*, a learned and venerable Bishop; chiefly intrusted by the Emperor in the affairs of the Church; and is commended both by *Eusebius* and *Socrates*, as excellent, admirable, and full of wisdom [b]. Which shews, what was the opinion both of the Church and the State, with regard to this question, or *parting point*, as *Dr. Waterland* calls it, before the Council of *Nice*.

[a] *Iren.* 1. 5. c. 8.

64. &c. it. *Socrat. Hist. Eccles.* 1. 1. c. 7.

[b] *Vid. Euseb. Vit. Constant.* 1. 2. c.

But to return to our story of *St. John* and *Cerintbus*. If we allow it to be true, the conduct of *St. John* cannot be considered in any other light, than as an extraordinary case, or the effect of that divine power, which was peculiar to the Apostles, and ceased with the Apostolic age; by which they were enabled to penetrate the hearts of men, and discern the secret motives, that actuated those early corruptors of the Christian faith. *Epiphanius*, as I have already intimated, declares it to have been suggested by a special inspiration. It is absurd therefore, to propose an act, directed by an extraordinary commission from heaven, as a rule of proceeding in ordinary cases: and it would make wild work among us, for weak and fallible men to revive and exercise a discipline, which was grounded on infallibility; and to pretend to judge, with an Apostolic authority, of the hearts and spirits of their fellow Christians, without the Apostolic gift of discerning those spirits; yet this is one of the principal points, which is pressed by *Dr. Waterland*, through his whole treatise on *the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity*.

The same Doctor however, on a different occasion, where he is vindicating the morality of certain acts, related of the antient Prophets and other pious men in the Old Testament, declares, "that such facts of an extraordinary kind, which were the immediate effects of a divine impulse, are not recorded as examples of common practice, nor to be warranted in common men, unless specially authorised in the same manner, as those Prophets were." The case is the same with regard to the Apostles: the severe censures, which they sometimes passed on Hæretics, and other wicked men, being the suggestions of a divine spirit, ought not to be drawn into precedent, but by the direction of the same spirit: for otherwise, the peace of the Church would necessarily be disturbed by perpetual schisms and quarrels, and it's best members, through the clamor and rage of a few zealots, often treated as the worst. Every man's experience will furnish instances, of the wretched fruits of this zeal, in the bigotted, vicious and ignorant part, both of the Clergy, and the Layety ;
2 who

who puffed with the pride of an imaginary orthodoxy, and detesting all free inquiry, as dangerous to their ease, and sure to expose their ignorance, take pleasure in defaming and insulting men of learning, candor and probity, who happen to be touched with any scruples, or charged with any opinions, which they think fit to call Hæretical.

The very learned and pious Bishop *Taylor*, speaking of this very story, says; *it is a good precedent for us, when the case is equal. St. John could discern the spirit of Cerinthus; and his heresy was notorious, fundamental, and highly criminal; and the Apostle, a person assisted up to infallibility.* It is this character then of Infallibility, which alone can warrant us in copying the pretended act of the Apostle; for unless we be possessed of this, the case can never be equal: and the sole inference, which we can reasonably draw in the mean time, from *St. John's* behaviour towards *Cerinthus*, as well as towards the Thief, above mentioned, is; that by his power of discerning spirits, he knew the Hæretic to be a profligate and determined enemy of the Christian faith; and the Thief, to be a good natured youth, who through the giddiness of his age, and the contagion of bad company, had been drawn inconsiderately into a rash and desperate frolic. But to propose this case, as a test or standing proof of the *superior iniquity of Hæresy, above the grossest immorality*; of it's being more abominable than robbery, or in some cases, as we are told [a], than even *felony or treason*, is certainly dangerous to society; tending to turn men's heads with fanaticism; and to introduce violent and sanguinary proceedings in the affair of religious differences.

For what else is it, that has given birth to all those murders and massacres, which Hæretics have so often suffered in all those countries, where this doctrine has ever prevailed, and to which they stand exposed at this day, wherever it still prevails? the effect is natural and unavoidable: for if robbery and treason be crimes so intolerable to society, that it is necessary to punish them

[a] Import. of the Doctr. of the Trin. p. 218.

with death, it follows of course, that crimes, more odious still both to God and man, must deserve a severer treatment; by the addition of racks, tortures and fires, which are all therefore actually applied in such cases, by every Christian nation, persuaded of the truth of this same principle.

Our Divines indeed take pains to disclame the charge of Popish cruelty, and profess to mean nothing more, than the necessity of *spiritual censures*. They tell us, that piety to God, charity to man, justice to ourselves require the exercise of such censures: *that it is fervent charity, tho' expressed in an harsher way; since palliating medicines would be cruel, where corrosives are the only means of cure* [a]. But all this is a mere fallacy, and the very cant of the Romish Inquisitors; who make the same pretence of piety, charity, and justice, without a grain of them in any of their proceedings, and in the very exercise of such barbarities, as are shocking to humanity itself [b].

Dr. Waterland however says, *that Divines may still desire, that such offenders may live to repent, rather than suffer death or civil penalties*. But what if they should not repent? why then, *they perish*, he says, *with their eyes open, and may take the blame to themselves* [c]. And in truth, all spiritual jurisdiction, whether in Popish or Protestant hands, must of course terminate in civil penalties; since it would be contemptible without them, and unable to enforce it's own censures. But since civil punishments for speculative opinions, if openly and professedly claimed, might be shocking to a free nation, it is artful to evade that odium, by beginning at the other end, and to establish the thing more securely, by seeming to disavow it. But it is certain, that there is very little difference between Protestant and Popish tyranny, if a liberty be not allowed to private judgement in all speculative opinions, without restraint, or fear of punishment, on any other account,

[a] See Import. of the Doctr. of the Trin p. 133.

—plenam charitatis instructionem. Ant. de Domin. Consil. redit. p. 23.

[b] Sanctæ Inquisitionis paternam curam

[c] Ibid. p. 218, 219.

than

than of it's being exercised unseasonably and intemperately to the disturbance of the state.

On the whole ; it appears, I think, from what is said above, 1st, that this hearsay-story, concerning *St. John* and *Cerintbus*, is at the best of so uncertain and doubtfull a credit, that we cannot reasonably lay any stress, or ground any point of duty upon it. 2dly, That if we should grant it even to be true, it would be absurd and dangerous to the peace of the Church, in it's present circumstances, to establish it as a rule of conduct, to private and ordinary Christians.

REMARKS,

5

E S S A Y

ON THE

Allegorical and Literal INTERPRETATION

OF THE

CREATION and FALL of M A N.

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E S S A Y

ON THE

Allegorical and Literal Interpretation

OF THE

CREATION AND FALL OF MAN

Allegorical Interpretation, &c.

IT is a principle constantly laid down by all the Expositors of Sacred Writ, that every part of it must be expounded in such a manner, as to render it consistent with reason, and the known attributes of the Deity; and whatever will not admit of that interpretation, cannot be received, as of divine authority. If this be true, it follows, that our notion of God and his Attributes is not to be drawn originally from the Scriptures, but from nature and reason, previously to our study of Scriptures, which otherwise would be apt to lead us into dangerous errors. *He who cometh to God, says the Apostle, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those, who diligently seek him [a].* It would be absurd, to make the divine Attributes, the rule of interpreting Scripture, and yet to take our notion of those Attributes from the same Scripture: for that would confound the rule, with the thing to be tried by it: and like travelling in a circle, instead of carrying us forward, would bring us onely to the point, from which we set out. The want of attention to this maxim, and the rashness of interpreting the Sacred books, without any just conception of the Deity, has given birth to all those senseless doctrines and Hæresies which have disturbed and disgraced the Christian Church in all ages.

For example; The literal acceptation of *the Mosaic History of the Creation and fall of man*, by it's seeming inconsistency, with

[a] Heb. xi. 6.

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the characters of the divine wisdom and goodness, induced certain Hæretics of the Primitive Church, to assert *the existence of two Gods, or independent principles; the one evil; the Creator of the world, and God of the Old Testament; the other good; the supreme God and Father of Jesus [a]*; while the same method of interpreting induced other *simpler Christians* also, as Origen tells us, *who honored the Creator, and thought nothing superior to him, to ascribe such things to him, as they would not believe of the most cruel and unjust of men [b]*. But neither those early Hæretics, nor simple Christians, could have fallen into such gross errors, if they had previously conceived and fixed in their minds, any rational notion of the nature of God. And in truth, there is not any part of the holy Scriptures, that has so much exercised the wit and invention of the Commentators, as this very History of the Creation, by the difficulty of reconciling it to the allowed attributes of the Creator.

I shall not enter into a particular examination of all their various expositions: some of them will fall in our way in the course of this argument. All that I propose at present, is, to compare onely in general, the several merits of the two principal and rival kinds of interpretation, the one according to the Letter, the other to Allegory; which have each of them been approved and preferred in their turns, in different ages of the Church.

By the Letter, I mean the Historical acceptation of the text, as a plain narrative of facts, supposed to have been transacted in the very manner and order, in which they are there related: by Allegory, I mean that latent and more refined way of delivering truth, under the dress of fiction, or fable, which was practised chiefly in antient times, and by the Sages of the Eastern world.

Clemens of *Alexandria*, one of the most learned and inquisitive of all the Primitive Fathers, declares, "that all, who treat of Theology, whether Greeks or Barbarians, have ever industri-

[a] Iren. l. 1. c. 28, 29. Origen. Præf. Hæret. 40.
Philocal. c. 1. p. 6, 7, 21. Tertull. [b] Orig. ibid. p. 7.

ously involved the beginnings of things, by delivering the truth in *enigmas, symbols, and allegories*. That this *symbolical* manner of instruction was in particular esteem with the *Hebrews* as well as the *Ægyptians*, and that the *Greeks* borrowed it from *Moses*. That truth under this veil of allegory carries a more awfull and majestic form. And that this kind of interpretation was of all others the most usefull to true Theology, and piety, and the sure proof of a superior wisdom and understanding [1].

Eusebius observes, " that the *Jews* were of two sorts, the learned and unlearned: that the latter of these, or the multitude, were subjected by *Moses* to the literal observation of his laws, as delivered in words: but the men of stronger minds were freed from that subjection, and trained to a more divine philosophy, and to penetrate into the hidden meaning. Agreeably to which distinction, he says; that they had public readers or Interpreters called *Deuterotæ*, who explained the recondite and ænigmatical sense, not promiscuously to all, but to such onely, as were qualified to receive it." All which he confirms by the authority of *Philo* and *Aristobulus*, and the constant practice of the *Essenes*, who followed this figurative manner of expounding, which, even in those days, was called antient [2].

On the other hand, it is certain, that the literal interpretation of the first chapters of *Genesis*, has been a perpetual source of doubts and difficulties to the best Commentators; and of raillery and ridicule to the enemies of reveled religion in all ages. *Celsus*, the old adversary of the Gospel, laughs at the story of *Adam's* formation, and of *Eve* made from his rib; of *God's* commands to them both; and of the *Serpent* opposing and eluding the effect of those commands, as an absurd old woman's tale: where *Origen*, in answer to him, observes, that he does not act fairly, but dissembles,

[1] *Stromat.* l. 5. p. 658, 670, 673, 679.
it. l. 2. 429. &c. Edit. Oxon.

xl. v. This *Aristobulus* is supposed to be the same person, who is praised in the 2d book of the *Maccabees*. c. 1. x.

[2] *Præpar. Evangel.* l. 8. x, xl. it. l.

what

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what he ought to have signified, that all this was to be understood in an allegorical sense; not giving his reader the words themselves, which would have put him in mind, that they were spoken figuratively. Yet Celsus himself owns on another occasion, that the reasonable and moderate both of the Jews and Christians were ashamed of these stories, and endeavoured to turn them into an Allegory [1].

Origen retorts likewise his own cavils upon him, by shewing
 “ that there were much fillier stories among their own writers,
 “ both Poets, and Philosophers, of which he gives several in-
 “ stances from *Hesiod* and *Plato*, which were all allegorized by
 “ their interpreters to a moral sense; and he urges it as unreason-
 “ able, to deny to the Jews, and to their Legislator *Moses*, what
 “ was allowed to all other nations; the possession of truth under
 “ the veil of mystery [2]:” in which reasoning he pursued the principles of his master *Clemens*. *Julian* also, after rallying, as *Celsus* had done, the particular articles of the same story, says; that unless it be considered as a fable, of a secret and mystical sense, it is full of great blasphemies against God [3].

It is commonly objected by the Naturalists, that the *Mosaic* account of the creation, if considered onely according to the letter, cannot possibly be reconciled to physical truth, or to the nature of things. *Eusebius* says in excuse for it, that it was not *Moses's* intention, to give a philosophical account of the formation of the world, but to signify onely, that it did not exist of itself or by chance, but was the production of an all wise and all powerfull Creator [4]. *Cyril* makes the same reply to the scoffs of *Julian*, that *Moses's* view was, to accommodate his story to the ignorance of the Jews; not to reason accurately on the origin of things, but to shew, that there was one God, who created them all [5]. Others, who contend for the necessity of allegory, are more severe upon the literal meaning.

Philo calls it a piece of rustic simplicity to imagine, that God really

[1] Cont. Cels. p. 186, 187.

[2] Cont. Cels. l. 4. p. 189.

[3] *Julian Oper. & Cyrill. contr.* Vol.

2. l. 3. p. 93, 94. Ed. Lips.

[4] *Præpar. Evangel.* l. 2. 7.

[5] *Vid. Julian Oper. ibid.* p. 50.

employed

employed the labor of six days in the production of things [1]: in which he is followed by *Origen*, *Austin*, *Ambrose*, &c. "What man in his senses, says *Origen*, will believe, that the first, 2d and 3d days, and the evenings and mornings passed without sun, moon, and stars? and the first even without the heavens? who so silly as to think, that God, like an Husbandman, planted a garden, and in it a real tree of life, to be tasted by corporeal teeth; or that the knowledge of good and ill was to be acquired by eating the fruit of another tree? and as to God's walking in that garden and *Adam's* hiding himself from him among the trees, he says; no man can doubt but that these things are to be taken figuratively, and not literally; to denote certain mysteries or recondite senses.

He contends also, that in some parts of the *Mosaic* history, there are interspersed certain absurdities or impossibilities, on purpose, to draw us away from the mere pleasure of the narration, lest by finding nothing in it worthy of God, we might apostatize from the true doctrine, and being unmoved by the letter, learn nothing divine from it [2].

It would be tedious to collect the strange variety of conceits, which have been invented, about the single article of a Paradise. One main argument against the reality of it, is, the ignorance, in which all ages have been concerning it's place and situation. It's being guarded so strictly by a *Cherubim and flaming sword*, if it be understood literally, necessarily implies, that after the expulsion of *Adam*, it was accessible still to man. Yet if it had actually subsisted in any part of the Eastern world, it is hard to conceive, why from the time of *Adam's* expulsion, there should not be the least mention of it's place or situation, in the records of those Antediluvian ages: since *Adam* himself was not probably far removed from it; and his posterity at least, upon their increase and dispersion from each other, must needs have been planted and settled on all sides of it.

[1] Vid. *Sext. Senenf. Biblioth.* l. 5. p.

[2] *Orig. Philocal.* c. 1. p. 12, 13.

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After the deluge indeed, and the universal change, which is supposed to have been made by it on the surface of the earth, it is not strange, that it's place and remains could not any where be discovered, notwithstanding all the pains, inquiries and even voyages of the curious in quest of it: among whom I find none so adventurous, as an Abbot of our own Island, named *Brandanus*, who is celebrated in Monkish story, for sailing round the world in search of it [1]. Yet it is certain, that it could never have been in any part of this terrestrial globe, if what the Primitive Fathers declare concerning it be true, that it was the place, *into which Enoch and Elias were translated, and into which, St. Paul also was caught up, in the third heaven: which Irenæus affirms, to have been taught by the Apostles, and delivered to him by those antient men, who had been their disciples* [2].

But there is not a single article of this narrative of the Creation, which, in it's literal sense, has not puzzled all the expositors, and furnished the Sceptics with perpetual topics of ridicule. In answer to whom, I have never met with one advocate of the letter, either antient or modern, who has ventured to affirm the whole to be rational and natural; or has not been forced to take shelter under Allegory, in one part of it or the other.

Josephus, in the Præface of his Jewish Antiquities, tells us, "that their Legislator *Moses* had dexterously involved some things in ænigma's, delivered others with dignity in Allegories, and literally explained, whatever was proper to be directly proposed: which to those, who are disposed to search into the causes of each, will afford much contemplation, and of a kind truly philosophical. That the purpose of his Antiquities was, to set forth onely the literal and historical part; but if God prolonged his life, he would endeavour to explaine the other parts also." And in the first chapter of his book, he clearly signifies, "that the story of the Creation was of the allegoric kind: for after a brief abstract of the first day's work, given in the

[1] Chytr. Onomastic. Bibl. p. 798.

[2] Iren. l. 5. c. 5. p. 405. vid. Not. 4.
" words

“ words of *Moses*, he adds; I could now explaine the cause of
 “ this, but since I have promised to give the causes of all in a
 “ separate volume, I will defer the interpretation of it to that
 “ time [1].”

Philo actually performed, what *Josephus* promised; and has
 largely explained all the allegories of the Mosaic law; and in a
 particular treatise *on the formation of the World, according to Mo-*
ses's account of it, he says; “ these are not fabulous tales, such
 “ as the poetic and sophistic tribe delight in, but figurative de-
 “ scriptions, leading us to allegorical and recondite senses; to
 “ which if any one rightly and rationally attends, he will aptly
 “ call the serpent the emblem of pleasure. First, because, being
 “ without feet, he lays his whole stress upon his belly: 2dly,
 “ because he makes the clods of earth his food: 3dly, because
 “ he carries poison in his teeth, which destroys all who are bit
 “ by him: all which noxious qualities belong also to the vo-
 “ luptuous man [2].”

St. Austin, in the preface to his twelve books, of *the literal*
interpretation of the three first chapters of *Genesis*, says; “ the
 “ question is, whether all these things are to be understood one-
 “ ly in a figurative sense, or to be embraced and defended by the
 “ rule of historical faith, as things, which were really transacted.
 “ For that they are not to be understood figuratively, no Christian
 “ will dare to say; who recollects, that the Apostle declares,
 “ *how all those things happened to them in a figure*, and recommends
 “ that, which is written in *Genesis*, *these two shall be one flesh*, as a
 “ great mystery, relating to Christ and the Church [3]. On the
 “ subject of *Paradise* also, he tells us, “ that there were three
 “ opinions about it, which were in a manner general: One, of
 “ those, who interpreted it, of a corporeal or material *Paradise*:
 “ another, of those, who understood it onely, of a spiritual one:

[1] Vid. Antiqu. Jud. Proem. & c.
 i. p. 5. Edit. Haverc.

[2] De Opific. Mundi Secund. Moyf.
 Op. T. i. p. 38. Ed. Lond.

[3] Nam non esse accipienda figuraliter,
 nullus Christianus dicere audebit &c. De
 Genes. ad litteram. l. i. c. i.

" and a third, of those, who considered it in both those senses; " sometimes in a corporeal and sometimes in a spiritual: and this " third opinion, he says: was that which pleased him [1]." Wherefore, after he had given the allegorical interpretation in another part of his writings, he professes in these twelve books, to explain the same things, according to their historical truth; yet even here, is frequently driven back again to Allegory, or as oft as he found himself unable, he says, *to accommodate the text to a proper and literal sense* [2].

But this double way of interpreting, which *Austin* here approves, and the Moderns generally follow, by considering one sentence as literal; the next, as allegorical; one part as a fact, the next as a fable; seems to be absurd and irrational; tending rather to confound, than enlighten the understandings of men; and was contrived without doubt for no other purpose, but the support of systems and prejudices, which plain scripture would not justify, till it was dressed up and seasoned as it were, by a mixture of senses which did not belong to it. Fables indeed may be grounded on things real and true; and a general notion of such truths may be artfully conveyed under the veil of fiction or Allegory: but historical and allegorical narrations are compositions of quite different kinds, and serving to different ends: the one to represent, by a literal description, the true and natural state of things; the other, to inculcate some hidden truth, quite different from what it literally represents. It seems impossible therefore, that two such opposite characters, which naturally destroy each other, can belong to the same subject; or that one and the same description can, by any art or mixture of senses, be rendered both truly historical and allegorical at the same time.

[1] Tres tamen de hac re quasi generales sunt sententiæ &c. *ibid.* l. 8. c. 1.

ib. l. 8. c. 2.

Tota ista sententia figurata est. *ib.* l.

[2] Et quia non mihi tunc occurrebant omnia, quemadmodum proprie possent accipi, magisque non posse accipi videbantur, aut vix posse, aut difficile; &c—

13. c. 36.

Hæc quoque in mulierem verba Dei, figurate & prophetice multo commodius intelliguntur. *ib.* c. 37.

From these authorities and reflections, I have ever been inclined to consider the particular story of *the fall of man*, as a moral fable or allegory; such as we frequently meet with in other parts, both of the old and new Testament, in which certain religious duties and doctrines, with the genuine nature and effects of them, are represented as it were to our senses, by a fiction of persons and facts, which had no real existence. And I am the more readily induced to espouse this sense of it, from a persuasion, that it is not onely the most probable and rational, but the most useful also to the defence of our religion, by clearing it of those difficulties, which are apt to shock and make us stumble as it were, at the very threshold.

For whether we interpret the story literally or allegorically, I take it to be exactly the same, with regard to it's effects and influence on Christianity; which requires nothing more from it, than what is taught by both the kinds of interpretation, *that this world had a beginning and creation from God; and that it's principal inhabitant man, was originally formed to a state of happiness and perfection which he lost and forfeited, by following his lusts and passions, in opposition to the will of his Creator.* For there could not be any religion at all, without the belief of such a Creator, nor any need of a reveled religion, but upon the supposition of man's fall. These two points then, as the antients observed, are all, that *Moses* proposed to deliver to us; and they are delivered with equal truth and efficacy, either in the literal or the allegorical way: nor do I find any reference to them in the sacred Scriptures, which appears to be inconsistent with the allegorical acceptance of them.

Have ye not read, says our Saviour to the Pharisees, *that he, who made them at the beginning, made them male and female? and for this cause shall a man leave his Father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh* [1]. He takes no notice of the particular manner of Eve's formation, from the rib of Adam;

[1] Matt. xix. 4. Marc. x. 6.

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but intimates onely in general the fact of their creation and the moral of it, which is equally deducible from the literal and the allegorical sense. *St. Paul* seems to allude indeed to the circumstance of the rib, where he says, *that the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man: and that Adam was first formed, and then Eve*: [2] whence he infers the subordination of the female Sex. But his argument, whether it be drawn from the letter or the allegory, would have the same force, since it is supposed, that the allegory itself was contrived for the purpose, of suggesting the same inference. Again, *I fear*, says *Paul to the Corinthians*, *lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve, through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity, that is in Christ*. [3] Where he seems to unfold the true meaning and hidden sense of the *Mosaic* parable, and to signify, that *Eve* was beguiled and seduced from her native simplicity, by the carnality of her lusts and affections. For as that was certainly the case of the *Corinthians*, so the Apostle's simile would not be pertinent, unless we take the serpent, as many of the learned have done, to be the *symbol of lust and sensual pleasure*.

The book of *Job*, according to the most probable opinion, is nothing else, but a kind of *Fable* or *Poetic Drama*; designed to inculcate the certainty of a divine Providence; the duty of patience in afflictions, and of submission to the will of God under all his dispensations, how severe or afflicting soever they may happen to be. This was the sense of the most antient and learned *Jews*; who had no clear account or probable tradition concerning either *Job* himself, or the author of the book: which some impute to *Moses*; some to *David*; some to *Isaiah*, or to one of the later Prophets; while others suppose it to have been written after the *Babylonish captivity*: Yet all of them seem to think, that *Job* himself, if such a man ever really existed, must have lived in the times of the Patriarchs, But be that as it will, it is evident, that every part of the book breaths a dramatic and fabulous

[2] 1. Cor. xi. 8.

[3] 2 Cor. xi. 3.

air: the council of Angels convoked by God; the appearance of Satan among them; his debate with God, and commission received from him; the several speeches of Job and his friends; the conclusion of the whole, by the apparition of God himself in a whirlwind; and all this, as the critics observe, delivered in verse, make it highly probable or certain rather, that it was intended, as I have said, for an instructive or moral Drama. Yet we find it referred to, and applied by *Ezechiel* and *St. James*, in the same manner as if it were a real history [1]; because it's moral or doctrinal part could not fail to have the same effect in the one way, as in the other.

I cannot however omit one argument for the reality of it's historic character, which was wanting, as I observed above, to the case of Paradise. For tho' the place of Paradise could never be discovered in any age, by the most laborious searches of the curious, yet *St. Chrysostom* assured us, "that it was common in his days to undertake dangerous voyages by sea, from the remotest parts of the earth, to visit Job's dunghill in Arabia, and upon sight of it, to kiss the ground, which that holy champion had stained with the blood of his ulcers, more precious than any gold; and from which they received, he says, infinite benefit, and much philosophical instruction [2]."

The case is the same with the parables of our Saviour. For example; the parable of *Dives and Lazarus*, is delivered in so lively and affecting a manner, as to have given rise to a dispute, both among the antients and the moderns, whether it be a fable or true history, or mixed and compounded of them both [3]. But in what way soever it be taken, it yields the very same fruit to us: and all the interpreters, from the time of it's publication to this day, have been drawing from it, as from a real history, many excellent lessons both of faith and practice. *St. Chrysostom*, in

[1] *Ezech. xiv. 14. Epist. Jam. v. 11.*

[2] *Chrysost. Oper. T. 2. p. 59. Edit. Benedict.*

[3] *Non autem fabulam retulit nobis*

pauperis & divitis. Sed primum quidem docuit, neminem oportere deliciis uti. &c. Iren. l. 4. c. 3. Vid. Not. 2.

four several Homilies, harangues upon it, as a perpetual source of instruction to all conditions of men; and tho' he treats it as a proper parable, yet he makes this reflection on the whole, *that advice and admonition have the surest effect, when we see the riotous chastised and punished not in words onely, but in fact and reality* [1].

To conclude, since it is allowed to have been the practice of all the sages of the antient world, in treating of the origin of things, and the sublime doctrines of theology, to wrap up what they delivered, under the veil of *Ænigmas, Symbols, and Allegories*; and since this was more peculiarly the custom of the *Ægyptians*, among whom *Moses* was born, and diligently trained in all the mysterious parts of their learning and wisdom; it is reasonable to imagine, that on the subject of the Creation, and the origin of man, he should use a manner of writing, which all other nations then used, and which his masters the *Ægyptians* had particularly taught him. This, I say, is what we should previously expect from such a writer, on such a subject; and this is what we find him to have actually performed; as it is evident, as well from the turn and manner of his writing, as from the testimony of those very people, for whose instruction he wrote; who generally treat these first chapters of *Genesis* as allegorical, and are said, to have restrained their youth from reading them on account of the difficulties of the literal sense, and the wrong notions, which it might imprint of God, till they had reached a maturity of age and judgement, which might qualify them to comprehend it's more recondite meaning. The Christians, also, when they received these books from the *Jews*, received from them at the same time, this same method of expounding, which they universally followed in the primitive ages: and on the authority of such guides, it cannot surely be thought rash, or give any just scandal, to adhere to the same interpretation; especially, since it will be found, as I have said above, the most effectual of all others, to clear our religion from those objections, which in all ages have shocked the faith of many, on their very entrance into it.

[1] Chrysost. T. 1. 719.

DE

LATINARUM LITERARUM

PRONUNCIATIONE

DISSERTATIO.

DE

LATINARUM LITTERARUM

PRONUNCIATIONE

DISSERTATIO

De Latinarum Literarum Pronunciatiōe Differtatio.

Consideranti mihi sæpenumero diversam illam, quæ apud diversas gentes obtinet, latinæ linguæ pronuntiandæ rationem, opus ille, non tam sibi jucundum, quam studiosis utile suscepturus videretur, qui verum priscumque latinarum vocum sonum exquirere & revocare conabitur.

Quis enim non videt propter hanc, quæ in hisce præsertim Regionibus invaluerit, pronuntiandi varietatem & licentiam, viros doctos latine inter se colloquentes vix sese mutuo intelligere, nec sine labore quodam & molestia, verborum quam maximè familiarium sensus percipere posse.

Ipse quidem cum apud exterarum gentes versarer, parum certè seu nihil potius commodi ex sermonis latini usu hauriendum animadverti; & ni linguarum etiam hodierno usu florentium subsidium mihi aliquod comparassem, caruissem maximo illo quidem & jucundissimo itinerum meorum fructu, quem ex hominum literatorum colloquiis & consuetudine familiari percepi.

Sensi enim viros, alioqui eruditos politosque, ob hoc ipsum latinæ locutionis incommodum peregrinantium sæpe congressus fugere; ni Gallicâ eos Italicæve linguâ uti posse intelligerent: cum enim linguam quisque latinam eodem plane modo ac patrium sermonem enuntiat, sequitur sanè, ut ne latine quidem loquentis verba sensusque intelligere queamus, ni linguam simul ejusdem vernaculam & gentilitiam teneamus.

Erasmus se adfuisse olim commemorat cum die quodam solenni complures Principum Legati ad Maximilianum Imperatorem salutandi causa advenissent, singulosque, Gallum, Germanum, Danum, Scotum &c. orationem latinam ita barbarè ac vassè pronuntiassè, ut Italis quibusdam, nil nisi risum moverent, qui eos non latine, sed sua quemque lingua, locutos jurassent.

Sin autem verus unquam nativusque literarum priscarum sonus revocari ac restitui, certa que aliqua pronuntiandi regula constitui

omnibus posset; non hisce modo malis remedium nobis paratum esset, linguasque alias perdiscendi labor viris doctis minueretur, sed lingua ipsa latina ad cæteras etiam omnes recte & grammaticè pronuntiandas tanquam exemplar & norma quædam proponeretur.

Sed contra omnino, & præposterè sanè hac in re fieri videmus, tantum enim abest ut ad linguæ latinæ normam regulamque, cæteræ, quæ nunc in usu sunt, reducantur omnes & corrigantur, ut cæterarum potius omnium vitia, sonosque barbaros in eam jam transferri cernamus.

Ex omnibus autem, apud quos latini sermonis usus adhuc aliquis restat, prima emendatæ locutionis laus Italici certè debetur: Itali vero proximam Anglis deferunt: rectè secusne alii judicent; quoniam ipse pro patriæ caritate iudex fortasse minus æquus existimarer: de Italici ratio certe ipsa evincit, homines illos, quorum in sermone non vocum latinarum vestigia solum, sed voces ipsæ, & vera quasi latinitas eluceant, unà cum vocibus a maioribus acceptis sonos etiam antiquos quam maxime retinuisse; idque cunctorum certè experientia confirmabit, ostendetque illud omne quod Italicæ pronuntiationis proprium, atque a reliquis linguis diversum videtur, non nisi a Romanorum veterum usu ac sermone esse derivatum; uti pluribus infra exemplis perspicuum fiet.

Elaborarunt olim hac in causa viri sane magni Erasmus, Lipsius, atque e nostris Chekus, Smithusque; quorum hi ad Græcæ potissimum linguæ, illi ad latinæ sese pronuntiationem non sine magna doctrinæ ingeniique laude applicaverunt: omnium autem maxime Erasmus; qui proprio Marte, nulloque præeunte, rem obscuram ac reconditam princeps explicare aggressus est, atque in hac disputatione, ut in aliis omnibus, sæculi sui tenebras barbariemque debellare, priscamque literarum & artium elegantiam revocare conatus est: Lipsius autem vix aliud mea quidem sententia fecisse videtur, ac Erasmi libellum, absque ulla ejus mentione, compilasse. Ab illis vero scriptoribus etsi plurima ingeniose atque erudite disputata sint, nonnulla tamen deesse, multa dubiè, quædam etiam falso posita animadverti; idque hac in causa accidisse, quod in cæteris plerisque solet, ut mortalium nemini detur rem invenisse simul & perfecisse.

Quippe

Quippe multa jam nobis suppetunt argumenti hujus explicandi subsidia, quibus illi carebant; eruta scilicet post illa tempora antiquitatis omnis monumenta; & magnæ illæ inscriptionum veterum moles, quæ collectæ simul, librisque pervulgatæ in publicum jam omnibus proponuntur: e quibus melius longe, opinor, quam ex ipsis grammaticis, prisca latinarum vocum pronuntiatio erui ac elici potest: literarum enim inter se permutationes, quas in inscriptionibus sæpe videmus, promiscuusque nonnullarum usus, maxime vero sculptorum in Orthographiæ leges peccantium errores germanam earum vim sonumque indicare plane videntur.

Romanis enim idem certe contigisse cognovimus, quod nobis fere quotidie contingit; Marmorarios scilicet istos, quibus lapidum inscribendorum cura commissâ fuerit, Orthographiæ regulas ignorantes, errores idcirco fœdos in verbis sæpe describendis admisisse, quos etsi verba minus recte, at verum verborum sonum, alienis licet literis, secutos esse ac dedisse constat: exempli gratia; si quis sonum literæ X, a Græcis acceptæ, investigare voluerit, in inscriptionibus eam antiquis nonnunquam per c & s expressam & permutatam videbit, ut in vicis; lucserunt. [...] quibus in verbis etsi litera ipsa non appareat, vis tamen ejus plene expressa reperietur: atque eodem modo in cæteris ex literarum, quarum vis cognita est, permutatione illarum, de quibus dubitamus, nativum sonum elicere valebimus.

Itaque dum Grammatici veteres literarum singularum sonos, quod certe difficile est, verbis describere atque exprimere laborant; marmora interea vetera sonum ipsum fictum quasi, ac formatum ante oculos ponunt. Hac igitur via insistendum, atque inscriptionum veterum ope literarum sonos exquirendos mihi atque indicandos proposui. In singulis vero describendis, eas omnes prætermittere visum est, quæ nihil in se singulare vel notatu dignum contineant, & in eis solum illustrandis consistere, quæ in sonos alienos delapsæ, atque a veterum usu detortæ videntur.

Primum igitur de vocalium pronunciatione, ex qua syllabarum vis omnis, sonusque pendent, quid statuendum sit videamus.

Ore contracto, magis quam par est, efferimus, quam tamen

A.

riçtu

ri^{ctu} patulo proferendam Grammatici veteres docent: [a] idque de Græcorum etiam A confirmat *Dionysius Halicarnasseus* [b] qui ex vocalibus longis eam sonantissimam esse scribit, proferrique ore quam maxime dilatato, spirituque cælum versus sublato. Atque hoc modo Itali eam Gallicque hodie efferunt; Romanosque etiam idem olim fecisse constat; nam in marmoribus antiquis ad A interdum V vocalem contra Orthographiæ leges adjunctam, ut AVROMATA-RIVS. (Grut. 636. 7) ARCHILAVOS. [ib. 582. 6.] & pro A longâ duplicem persæpe positam videmus, ut PAASTORES [150. 7] FAATO [1046. 6] &c. quæ omnia non nisi soni dilatationem quandam significare videntur. FAATO NAATAM. Fabrett. 421.

E. Vocalis sonum distincte & accurate explicare difficilior videtur; Italos ego, uti nostros etiam, recte eam proferre censeo in vocibus, ascendo, ventus &c. Gallos vero pessime, qui iisdem in locis eam ad sonum A dilatare solent.

I. Sonum habuit medium quendam & communem cum superiori E. Hoc Grammatici tradunt; confirmatque *Quintilianus*, [c] qui T. Livium Sibe & Quase pro Sibi & Quasi uti solere dicit. Neque ullarum toties in inscriptionibus antiquis, quoties harum inter se vocalium permutatio reperitur, ut TETVLVS SACREFI-CIVM BENIVOLENTIA CAMINA [f] atque hinc mihi verisimile videtur Romanos veteres eundem huic vocali sonum attribuisse atque Itali hodie, nec alium ac nos per duplicem E exprimimus in Street, See. &c. quod ex hisce præsertim vocibus apparet. DIANA. SPOLIA. EXEAT. CAVEAS. quas ita sæpe scriptas reperio. DE-ANA. SPOLEA. EXSIAT. CAVIAS. [g] in quibus eum fere sonum quem dixi expressum videmus.

Latini veteres I longam per EI Græcorum diphthongum scribebant: quem scribendi morem a Grammaticis memoratum plurimæ nobis adhuc inscriptiones conservant, ut CEIVIS. EITVR. IPSEIVS. QUEI. [h] neque aliter Græci in Romanis nominibus,

[a] Marius Victorinus de enuntiatione iterarum.

[b]

[c] Gruter. 636. 7. 582. 6.

[d] Ib. 150. 7: 1046. 6.

[e] l. 1. c. 7.

[f] Vid. Gruter. 1061. 6. 328. 1. 443. 6. 47. 19.

[g] Vid. ib. 39. 4. 7. Cenotaph. Pisan. 755. 1. 629. 1. ult.

[h] Gruter. 206. 1. 171. 8. 541. 7.

ut ANTONINOC. ΦΑΥCTEINA. [c] Utrumque enim idem planè sonuisse ex epistola quadam Ciceronis ad Pætum [d] colligere possumus; in qua de verbis, quæ obscœna habebantur, ludens, cum loquimur, inquit, terni, nihil flagitii dicimus, at cum bini, obscœnum est; alludens scilicet ad Græcam vocem βινεῖ, ut Græci vero I longam per EI. ita latini EI Græcorum quandoque per E productam, quandoque per I scribebant, ut Νεῖλος Nilus. Επικουρεῖος Epicureus, qua in voce I tamen pro E posita interdum legitur. Epicurius. [e] quod sonum utrisque persimilem fuisse demonstrat. ARIA. Fab. 153.

Lipsius dicit solos Europæorum Britannos hanc vocalem recte proferre, [f] at omnium potius meo iudicio pessimè, atque a veterum more remotissime, uti ex pronunciatione vocum nostrarum Mind. Bind. &c. cum superioribus collata apparebit.

Nec minus quidem barbarè nostri literam I, cum consonantis loco ponitur, efferunt; qui pro ea semper G pronunciant, ut magestas. gecit. quam pronunciandi rationem Romanis penitus ignotam fuisse existimo, qui eam ita in Majorca, Iuno, Iecit efferebant, uti nos Y consonantem in York, You, Yes. I, inquit Priscianus [g] modo pro simplici, modo pro duplici accipitur consonante; pro simplici, quando in principio dictionis ab ea incipit syllaba subsequente vocali ut Iuno: pro duplici, quando in medio dictionis ab ea incipit syllaba post vocalem, ut Majus, Pejus, ubi antiqui solebant geminare I & scribere Maiius, Peiius: quod non aliter pronunciari posset, quam si cum priori syllaba prior I, cum posteriori altera proferretur Pei-ius. atque ita Pompei-ius; cuius genitivus per tria I scribebatur. Quæ Prisciani verba sonum illum mollem dulcemque I consonantis, quem modo indicavi, designare planè videtur, nempe eundem prorsus quo Itali hodie easdem voces efferunt.

Eundem olim sonum habuisse apud veteres Romanos atque hodie apud Italos, Græcæ scilicet diphthongi ou, certissimum est. Quippe ita eam in marmoribus antiquis persæpe scriptam & expressam videmus, ut LOVGET. IOVSIT. INDOVCEBAMVS. OB

[c] Inscript, Florent. 375.

[d] Epist. 1. 9. 22.

[e] Aldi Orthograph. p. 20:

[f] De rec. pronunciat. lin. lat. c. 8.

[g] L. 1. c. de literar. numero.

INIOVRIAS IOVDICATI. [a] idque Grammatici etiam omnes confirmant [b]. nec Græci eam aliter in Romanis nominibus, ac per *ou* scribunt, ut IOTAIOC. AOTKIOC. &c. [c] atque hinc apud Suidam *Κυριος*. Curiosus. *Ιδιον*. *Ιδιος*. *Ιδιον*. *Ιδιον*. At de V consonantis sono haud inter doctos constare video: Erasmus Lipsiusque [d] eam per nostram W. proferendam censent, ut Winum, Wultus. idque variis argumentis probare conantur, nec aliam omnino vim Æolico Digamma attribuunt, cui hanc literam successisse Grammatici tradunt. At Priscianus contra [e] Æolicum Digamma eandem vim ac Græcorum *ϕ*, seu Latinarum PH, vel F habuisse confirmat, postea vero placuisse Latinis ejus loco V consonantem adhibere, qui cognatione soni videbatur affinis esse. Quibus verbis hanc consonantem non alium apud veteres, atque apud nos hodie, sonum obtinuisse ostenditur.

Miratur autem Erasmus literas hasce F & V consonantem ob tantam soni affinitatem nusquam inter se commutas reperiri: at Jo. Tertullium memorasse scribit, [f] se inscriptionem veterem Romæ vidisse, in qua FIXIT. pro VIXIT. bis positam legisset. Atque in multis aliis inter Romana nomina animadverti. VICTORIA. VICTORIANVS. VICARIVS. FARVS. [g] quæ ab eodem fonte profluxisse videntur.

At hanc literam cum B plerumque permutatam cernimus. Ut BIXIT. VIBVS. OCTABIANVS. OVVIOLARIT. [b] Ista vero cum litera B affinitus a sono nostræ W. quam maximè aliena videtur. Neque illud omnino verisimile est, ejusmodi sonum Romanis unquam familiarem fuisse, cujus nullum prorsus apud Italos, sed apud gentes solummodo remotas & barbaras, vestigium remanserit. CVVICVLO. IVVEO. Fabrett. Inscrip. Ant. p. 102. VNIBERSIS. ib.

VICTORIAE CONIVGI. 630. VICTORIA. 240. BICTORIA. 274. Hæc vero, quæ de vocalium pronunciatione disputata sunt, de sono earum generali ac communi dicta intelligantur: quippe apud

[a] Grut. 1055. 1. 174. 8. 499. 12. 204.

de Orthograph.

[b] Mar. Victorin. l. 1. Priscian. l. 1. de num. li.

[f] Jo. Tortel. Orthograph. de litera

[c] Inscrip. Florent. p. 51. 22.

F. fol. 4. ib. 172.

[d] Erasmi. de recte pronuntiat. p. 168.

[g] Grut. 643. 6. 886. 15. 911. 17.

Lips. c. 12.

757. 9.

[e] Ibid. vid. etiam Mar. Victorin. l. 1.

[b] Grut. 334. 2. 757. 1. Inscr. Flor. p.

172. 145.

veteres, uti apud nos hodie, easdem vocales, non eandem semper vim in cunctis æquè locis obtinuisse liquet; neque in syllabis breviter celeriterque enuntiandis sonus cujusque proprius distincte & accurate proferri ac exprimi poterat: atque hinc fit, ut in inscriptionibus antiquis omnium fere vocalium, utcunque inter se dissimilium, permutationes usumque promiscuum in ejusmodi locis inveniamus. Ut. MONO. MONI. MONUMENTVM. HERCO. HERCVLES. PIGNE PIGNORA. OPTV. OPTIMVS. [a]

Diphthongos quod attinet, nomen ipsum naturam earum indicat: videlicet, cum binæ vocales in eadem syllabâ coeuntes sono quodam duplici, sed mixto & in unum quasi conflato, proferuntur; ita tamen ut utriusque etiam vim percipere queamus. Ejusmodi vero sonus cum non nisi difficulter, nec sine oris labore quodam accurate exprimi poterat; usus hominum communis, in mollitiem semper deliciasque delabens, illum ita paulatim emollivit, ut diphthongos demum ad vocalium simplicium gradum revocaverit. Atque hinc in diphthongo Æ. omiſſa altera vocali A. & pro nihilo habitâ, in altera E Romanos olim constituisse, eamque unice expressisse reperio; quod marmora antiqua demonstrant, in quibus diphthongus hæc cum E vocali promiscuè ubique usurpata & commutata, tum in longis, tum brevibus etiam Syllabis occurrit. ut. ÆIVS. ÆXTÆRVM. VENÆRI. EDIFICIVM. EGYPTVS. PRETORIVM. [b] Undè sonum utriusque similem seu eundem potius fuisse perspicuum est. Sculptores enim, ut supra dixi, orthographiæ ignaros, non nisi aurium judicium, sonique rationem in verbis describendis secutos esse necesse est.

Æ.

CONIVGIS SVE. [Cameræ ed Iscrizione sepolchral. Inf. 182.]

FILIAE QVE VIXIT. Inſcrip. Florent. p. 178.

Hæc diphthongus per OI antiquitus scribebatur, & utrovis modo cum V vocali confundebatur: ut COIRAVIT. COERAVIT. CVRAVIT. OIT. OET. VTILE. [c] Hujus autem affinitatis ratio explicatu mihi difficilis videtur: eumque scribendi morem apud priscos solummodo Romanos obtinuisse, ac obsolevisse postea constat.

Æ.

[a] Grut. 946. 6: 608. 2: 6. 2: 1052. pronunt. Gr. 1053. 2: 376. 3: 28. 5: 10: 329.

[c] Ib. 59. 8: 100. 8: 499. 12.

[b] Grut. 542. 2: 756. 2: Lips. de

M m m

Hanc

Hanc enim diphthongum eodem modo ac superiorem tractari, atque ad sonum simplicem vocalis E redigi tandem reperio. Pro qua in inscriptionibus persæpè posita occurrit. Ut EPHOEBVS. FOELIX. PROSCOENIVM [d] quibus in verbis propter E longam, sonumque adeo ejus minime dubium, sculptor in iis licet scribendis peccare, in sonandis tamen nullo modo poterat.

Præterea diphthongos hæc Æ & OE. alteram pro altera nunquam positas cernimus, ut in familiarum nominibus. CAE. & COELIA. CAE. & COERANVS, CAE. & COESONIVS [e] ex quibus patet, apud Romanos olim, uti apud nos hodie, haud alium utramque sonum ac vocalem E habuisse.

De reliquis diphthongis parum mihi lucis ex inscriptionibus antiquis suppeditatur: eas autem ab Italis recte pronuntiari censeo, qui ita efferunt, ut utriusque vocalis vis percipi clare & distingui possit.

AV. Diphthongo sonum illi tribuunt latiore, crassioreque quam nostra lingua agnoscit, ejus vero non absimilem, quem in verbo nostro *owe* exprimimus; præsertim si rusticorum more, ac si per a scriptum esset, pronuntiaretur, nos certe hanc diphthongum mollius, quam par est, & ore nimis contracto efferimus. Galli vero omnium pessimè, qui ei semper sonum vocalis O adjungunt.

EV. Haud male a nobis pronuntiari existimo, in vocibus latinis Euge, neuter &c. in nostris shew. lewd. &c.

Æ. Conjugi sue Julie Longine Fabrett. 83, sine ulla litæ. 95.

Gleba & Gleba promiscuè scribitur in antiquissimo Cod. Virgil. medico quem ipse vidi Norr, 431.

C. Ante vocales A. O. V. eundem olim sonum habuisse ac hodie habet certissimum est: qualem autem ante reliquas E & I, diphthongosque AE. OE. EV. habuerit, haud ita convenit. Angli illam, Gallicque etiam, haud ab S. distinguunt. in Cœna. Cæsar. Ceres. Cinis &c. at in iisdem Itali, quod Romanos etiam fecisse olim existimo, eum huic literæ sonum tribuunt, quo nos *ch* efferimus, in vocibus nostris Cheek; Cherry, Cheap &c. itaque pronuntiant Cicero, uti nos Chichester; Chicheley, &c. ita tamen ac si ante C, cum in medio vocis sequatur vocalem, litera T. leviter admodum & subobscurè sonanda interponeretur. Ut Cicero,

[d] 689. 4: 273. 6: 168. 10: [e] 52. 6: 670. 8: 240: 122: 351. 3: 372. 1: Chit-

Chitchester. quam pronuntiandi rationem expressisse planè sculptor quidam videtur, qui in inscriptione veteri contra orthographiæ regulas T ante C interposuit in nomine Vrbitcius. [f] Hanc autem Italorum consuetudinem Lipsius prorsus deridet, literamque C eandem prorsus vim ac K ante omnes pariter vocales obtinuisse contendit. [g] At virum doctum, Germanorum suorum sonis nimis faventem, hoc in loco, uti alias sæpè errasse constat. Nam etsi K ante vocales A. O. V. pro C. persæpe scripta reperitur. Ut Karcer. Kos. Kujus. &c. [h] ante reliquas tamen nusquam ita positam animadverti; ex quo utrumque illud probari videtur, tum literas hæc eandem plane vim nonnullis in locis, tum diversam quandam in aliis habuisse; atque hinc in Carcer. primam C cum K commutatam videmus, at secundam non item. In inscriptionibus vero antiquis litera hæc ante I in medio vocis sequente altera vocali, nunquam, ut dixi, cum K, sæpissime tamen cum T commutata cernitur. Ut Domicius. Palacium. Fabritius. Fetalis. Condicio. [i] cujus quidem permutationis in literis tam inter se potestate dissimilibus nulla certe ratio reddi posset; ni utræque iis in locis positæ sonum quendam tum inter se consimilem, tum diversum ab eo quem alibi obtinerent, habuissent. Nunquam enim aut earum permutatio aut soni affinitas aliqua cernitur, nisi ante I sequente altera vocali. Quo in loco quum T. sonuisse ut Ts infra ostendatur, sequitur plane C sonum ei persimilem habuisse, nec alium quidem ac quem supra indicavi, quemque Itali hodie illi iisdem in locis assignant. Constanciæ. Fabrett. 102. dicionem. 169. condicio. 378. solacium. 421. negociantur. cenot. Pis. p. 301. Numicius. ifus. 151. II. v. 55.

Hanc literam omnes eodem modo efferunt ante A. O. V. ante ceteras vocales diphthongosve mollius ea quiddam apud Romanos olim, uti apud nos hodie, sonuisse videtur; contra omnino ac Lipsius disputat; qui hanc omnibus consonantibus regulam generalem constituit, videlicet eas eundem semper atque unicum solummodo cunctis

G.

[f] Grut. 1059. 3.

[i] Ib. 689. 9: 232. l. 10: 101. 5:

[g] Lips. de Pronunt. lin. lat. c. 13.

457. 2: Ald. Orthog. p. 295.

[h] Grut. 80. 5. 607. 1.

æquè in locis sonum obtinere; contenditque adeo G aliam nusquam habere vim ac quam in voce lego. [k]

At in marmoribus vetustissimis, cum jam litera hæcce nondum inventa ac inter latinas recepta esset, C pro ea usurpatam videmus; ut in Duilliana illa LECIONES. CARTACINIENSIS. &c. [l] Et in multis etiam aliis ante vocales E & I. eam pro G positam animadverti. Ut MACESTERIVM. PRIMICENIVS. [m] quibus in locis cum literam C molliorem quendam sonum, ut apud Italos, quem nos per ch exprimimus, obtinuisse probavi, sequitur plane G etiam sonum itidem mollem & consimilem habuisse; eundem, opinor, quem Itali jam, nostrique etiam in verbis legio, magistratus illi attribuunt.

GN.

Cum literam G in medio dictionis sequatur N. ut magnus. Itali alteram ei N in pronuntiando præponunt, atque I vocalem utrisque subjiciunt; deinde ipsi G subobscurum admodum sonum tribuentes, ita vocem ipsum efferunt ac si scriberetur Mang-nius vel Mannius. Quod Romanis etiam antiquis in usu fuisse perspicuum est: nam in vetustis quibusdam inscriptionibus, quo sonus iste melius exprimeretur, I post GN. interpositam nonnunquam animadverti, ut. MAGNIO [n] ABIEGNIEAS. [o]

Id vero a Græcorum consuetudine profluxisse liquet, quos literæ Γ sequente altera Γ vel X, K, Ξ. sonum literæ N tribuisse cognovimus; ut ΑΓΓΕΛΟC. ΕΓΧΕΙΡΙΔΙΟΝ. ΑΝΑΓΚΗ. ΦΙΓΞ. Angelus. Enchiridium. Sphinx. atque hinc in inscriptionibus Græcis ejusmodi verba cum N interdum interposita scribi videmus. ut. ΑΝΑΝΚΗ. ΕΠΑΝΓΕΛΛΑΜΕΝΟC. [p] quam consuetudinem latinos etiam secutos esse Victorinus ostendit; [q] qui pro Agger Anger; Suggestum, Sungestum; Ancilia, Agcilia scribi oportere censet. Atque hanc denique pronuntiandi dulcedinem significare mihi Cicero videtur. Erant, inquit, [r] noti, navi, nari; quibus cum IN præponi oporteret, dulcius visum est ignoti, ignavi, ignari dicere.

MAGNIO. MAGNIVS. MAGNIA &c. Fabrett. Inscr. an. p. 14. 249. 254. 292.

H.

Non tam literam quam aspirationis notam seu signum literæ validius intentiusque proferendæ a grammaticis existimari video. Scribit

[k] Ib. c. 14.

[l] Grut. 404. 1.

[p] Inscription. Florent. p. 22. l. 16.

[m] 1065. 9: 107. 4.

[n] Inscript.

[q] Mar. Victorin. l. 1. de Orthograp.

Florent. bis.

[o] Gr. 207.

[r] Orator. p. 265.

Cicero,

Cicero, [r] veteres Romanos ea nusquam nisi in vocali usos itaque locutos esse, ut pulcros; cetegos; triumphos; Kartaginem dicerent. Quam consuetudinem cum ipse aliquandiu secutus esset, propter aurium tamen voluptatem se repudiasse tandem ac populo reliquisse dicit; fatetur autem nonnullis in vocibus vel aurium ipsarum iudicio servari eam debere, ut in orci-vios. otones. sepulcra. lacrymas. Populum vero in hisce aurium deliciis, sonorumque differentiis dijudicandis haud ita delicatum atque elegantem fuisse constat: sed cum usus hominum, ut dixi, ad partem molliorem semper facilioremque delabatur, aspiratio hæcce ob molestum quandam vocis intentionem negligi paulatim et tam in vocalibus quam consonantibus nihili tandem haberi, cœpta est. Quippe in inscriptionibus antiquis eam sæpissimè tum in verborum initiiis prætermisam, tum e mediis syllabis ejectam reperio. Ut Omo. Onestus. Eres. Tratia. Eleuterus. Eutycus. Aduc. Agatopus. Cyato. Trepto. &c. [s] Sepulchr. de ser. 40. 46. At aliis contra in locis adjectam eam supervacaneè & contra orthographia leges interpositam sæpe videmus, ubi nullam omnino vim habuerit necesse est. Ut. Heridanus. Hillyricum. Horiundus. Hornamentis. Amynthas. Ponthes, Prothesilaus. &c. [t] ex quibus omnibus Erasmi sententia minùs mihi firma videtur, qui TH eo semper sono efferri oportere disputat quo nos in voce nostra *Theif* utimur; [u] apparetque potius, aspirationem hancce parvam admodum seu nullam prorsus soni intentionem in usu Romanorum communi vel vocalibus vel consonantibus adjecisse quæ loquendi consuetudo a Romanis ad Italos derivata omnem jam tandem aspirationem e lingua prorsus Italica exterminavit. Anthiocus. Fabrett. p. 40. The-Teontas. 30. chorona, 123. Thyranno. 166. Tæodora. 341.

Literam prorsus supervacaneam esse grammatici omnes fatentur, quippe nullam omnino vim sibi propriam aut a litera C diversam obtinet: nonnulli tradunt eam ante vocalem A propriè ac unice adhiberi solere ut. Kalendæ Karthago: at ejusmodi distinctio parum mihi certa aut stabilis videtur, neque ullum ei locum, sonumve peculiarem

K.

[r] Orator. p. 265. [s] 588. 9. 302. 2. [t] Grut. 52. 12: 396, 1: 529. 427. 1: 521. 7: 402. 4: Inscript. Flor. p. 7: 451. 6: 914. 6: 150. 7: [u] de pronuntiat. lin. lat. &c. p. 157. 26. it. 29. it. 406. it. 431. Grut. 1056. 1.

a veteribus assignatum reperio: in inscriptionibus antiquis pro C, ut supra ostendi, persæpe posita occurrit. ut Karus. 333. 9. Kaput. 214. Kos. 607. 1. Kujus. &c.

PH. Eundem olim sonum habuisse ac F. inscriptiones veteres confirmant, in quibus alterum pro altero promiscue adhiberi cernimus. ut AMFION. TRIVMFVS. PHIDELIS. [x]

Q. In literarum supervacanearum numero a grammaticis habetur. K & Q. inquit Priscianus, [y] *quamvis figura & nomine videantur aliquam habere differentiam, cum C tamen eandem tum in sono vocum quam in metro continent potestatem.* Existimabatur olim vim literarum C & V conjunctam possidere, ideoque nonnulli QIS QAE. QID. pro QVIS. QVAE scripserunt. [z] At eam cum V vulgò scribi videmus, nec aliter omnino sonare ac C. cum qua eam persæpe commutatam ac promiscue usurpatam reperimus. ut. ACVA. CVO. AQVITVR. MEQVM. PEQVNIA. [a] CVOTTIDIE. Fabrett. 272.

T. Ante I sequente etiam altera vocali. uti in IVSTITIA. pronuntiatur ab Italis, tanquam TS, vel TZ. quod Romanos etiam veteres fecitasse Papirius quidam grammaticus tradit. [b] At hunc pronuntiandi morem Papiriumque item ipsum vehementer irridet Lipsius, [c] neque alium prorsus literæ T. hoc in loco ac in ceteris omnibus sonum tribui debere contendit. Quicquid vero ille disputet, vel hoc uno marmore refutari existimo, in quo CRESCENTSIANVS. cum S post T ad sonum ejus plenius exprimendum interpositâ scribitur. [d] Illam autem T, quia leviter tantum & subobscore, ut apud Italos hodie, pronuntianda esset, prætermisam alio in loco & per S solummodo repræsentatam a sculptore cernimus. Ut VOLCASIVS. [e] Bonifatæ. 299. Fabrett. amatius. amasius. 603. comitius. icius. 617. Fabritio. Robertell. emend. p. 46.

X. Loco CS, vel GS a Græcis inventam atque a Latinis assumptum esse Priscianus docet: [f] *qua carere potuimus*, inquit *Quintilianus*, [g] *ni quæsissemus.*

[x] Grut. 125. col. 5: 285. 6: 943.

[y] l. 1. de num. literar. [z] Vel. Longius de Orthograph. [a] Grut. 593. 5: 786. 5: 138. 817. 12: 102. l. 7.

[b] Vid. Aldi Orthogr. p. 563.

[c] de pronunt. lin. lat. c. 14. [d] Grut. 127. l. 1. [e] Inscr. Flor. p. 400. [f] l. 1. de num. lit. [g] l. 1. c. 4.

Græcæ prorsus literæ sunt; nec a Latinis usquam, uti grammatici tradunt, nisi in Græcis quibusdam nominibus usurpatæ. ut HYLAS. ZEPHYRVS. &c. [b]

Y & Z.

Omnes, qui de hac quæstione scripserunt, literam Y (quæ a Græcis Upsilon dicitur) sonum vocalis V, Gallico more pronuntiata habuisse contendunt; eundem scilicet, quem eidem nos vocali tribuimus in vocibus Duke, Flute, Lute. Centyria. Fabrett. 175. Tyfcia ib. Vyrginem. 53. Olumpus. 175.

Chekusque noster præsertim *lumen sonorum extinctum dicit, cum Y, uti semper apud nos, ad sonum I traducatur.* [i] Attamen ea nonnunquam cum I commutata in marmoribus antiquis invenitur, ut NIMPHIS. BYBLIOTHECA. [k] At multo sæpius, cum V, Ut IL-LVRICVM. SVRIA. CENTYRIA. SATYRNVS. [l] Quod Erasmi sententiam confirmare videtur, qui hanc literam medium quiddam inter I & V Gallicam sonuisse existimat.

A Græcis accepta vice literarum S & D apud Latinos fungebatur: *si assumpta non esset, inquit Max. Victorinus, [m] pro Mezentius, scriberemus Mesdentius.* Quam scribendi consuetudinem *Dores etiam inter Græcos secutos esse constat;* qui pro μελιζειν dabant μελισδειν. Eos vero ut pro Z non *εδ* modo, sed *δς* etiam usurpasse cognovimus; ita Romanos etiam idem fecisse, idque ad Italos inde profluxisse verisimile est, qui hanc hodie literam per *ds* semper efferunt.

Z.

[b] Max. Victorin. de lit.

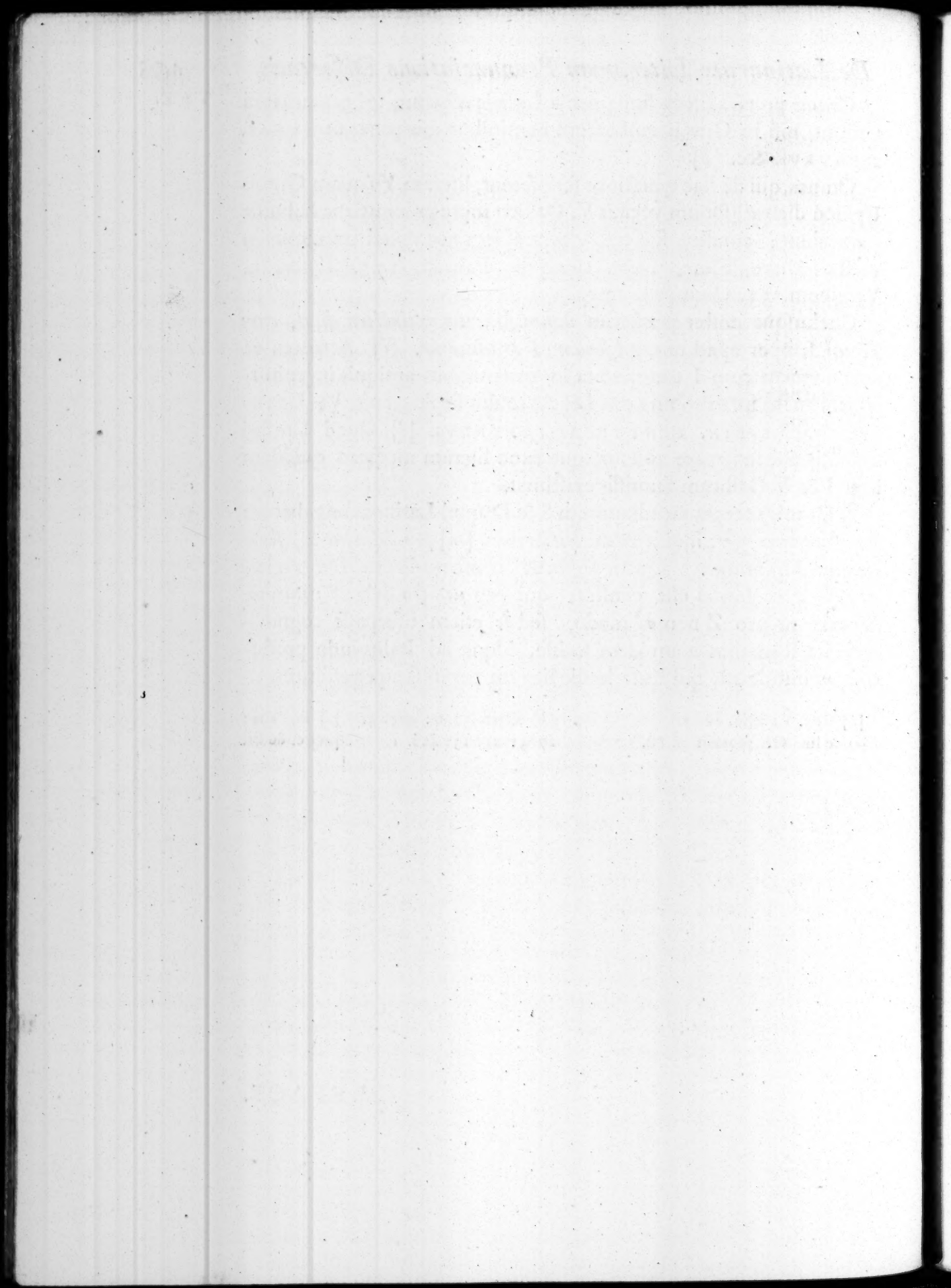
[i] de lin. Gr. pronunt. p. 88.

[k] Grut. 36. 6: 475. 4.

27. 5: 45. 13: 422. 1.

[l] ib. 297:

[m] c. de lit.





A
P R E F A C E
To an intended
A N S W E R
To all the
O B J E C T I O N S
Made against the
F R E E I N Q U I R Y.



THE AMERICAN FREE INQUIRY

A

PREFACE

To an intended

ANSWER

To all the

OBJECTIONS

Made against the

FREE INQUIRY.

BY JOHN W. F. ALLEN, &c.

1844

P R E F A C E

IT was easy to foresee, that the publication of my *Free Inquiry* would presently raise up against me, as my *Introductory Discourse* had done before, many fierce Adversaries, with Answers and confutations of it; charging me with desperate designs, and pernicious consequences; with calumniating the Holy Fathers; misrepresenting their testimonies; and straining them to senses quite different from their own. For this is no more, than what I had reason to expect, from the very nature of my work; the purpose of which is, to extirpate an inveterate opinion, which has ever been held up by the authority of the Clergy, and obtains credit at this day, in every Church, and sect of Christians whatsoever.

Opinions of this kind, possessed of the public belief, and thought to be connected with the public religion, necessarily create many strong prejudices in their favour, and many motives of different kinds, for the perpetual support and defence of them; ever ready to give the alarm, against all free inquiry, and to excite a clamor against the Inquirer, from all, who had ever preached them from the pulpit, or maintained them from the press; all, who thought them true; or found them useful to their ease, their authority, or their fortunes; whose resentment on such occasions will always be more strong, in proportion, as the opinions in dispute happen to be weak and likely to be disgraced by the trial.

It was impossible therefore, that my argument could be received with indifference in this inquisitive nation, unless the incapacity of the author to illustrate and adorn it, had exposed it to the neglect of men of taste and politeness. But since the approbation, which it has met with, gives me reason to think, that I have not greatly failed in that part: and since the truth or at least the high probability of it is loudly acknowledged by all disinterested readers; I do not know how to account for that virulence of zeal, with

which it is opposed still by the generality of these writers, but by imputing it to their prejudices, or habitual bigotry, or to some motive especially of interest, which, of course, bars all entrance to opinions, though ever so probable, if not stamped by an authority, which can sweeten them with rewards.

For to what other principle can we ascribe, that uniform and perpetual contradiction, which they give to every single article of the free Inquiry? Some of them do not scruple to declare, *that there is not the least pretence to any sort of evidence; nor so much as the shadow of an argument in the whole work*: others, though they allow one or two things perhaps *to be plausible*, yet treat them presently as bubbles, and blow them at once into air, as void of all solidity: nay, they turn my whole argument so strongly against me, as to make it prove the very contrary, to what I proposed to establish by it. Instead of diminishing the credit of the Fathers, they affirm it to be *a clear vindication of their honor*; and instead of exposing *their credulity*, to be *a proof onely of my own*: instead of demonstrating *the cessation of the primitive miracles*, they call it a *demonstration of their continuance*; and instead of *serving the interests of Protestantism*, the *strongest temptation in the world to make men Papists*: in short, they profess to find nothing else in my book, from one end of it to the other, but a success of *downright forgeries and falsifications*.

Now what instruction can we expect, in a question of this importance, from answerers, so void of candor; who, with a solemn air and pretext of religion, can offer such an insult to the common sense of every reader? For, notwithstanding all their confident assertions, it is certain, that nothing can be made more evident by any book, than these two points are, by the Free Inquiry: first, that the Facts and testimonies produced in it, must necessarily *detract somewhat, from the characters of the Fathers, and the implicit faith, which has been given to them in their reports of the primitive miracles*: secondly, that the general argument of it *strikes at the very root of Popery*, and must consequently be fatal to it, wherever it may happen to be received in any Christian country.

But

But let the bigotted, the interested, or the powerfull exert themselves as much as they please, it is a truth confirmed to us by the experience of all ages, that all the opinions, which now reign in the world, how strongly soever established, or how antient soever they may be; if not grounded originally on nature, but on the consent onely and contrivance of men, will be sure in the end, to find the same fate with old buildings: which, while they acquire a sort of veneration to themselves from their very age, are every day gradually weakened and insensibly consumed by that same age; till being found at last rotten and ruinous, they are demolished, by common consent, as unable, either to stand, or to be supported any longer. Such will be the fate of the opinion, now defended by my Antagonists: for the fullness of time seems to be come, or at least to be nearly approaching, when we may be allowed to laugh without offence at the pious frauds of the antient Fathers, and add the stories of their miracles to that numerous list of impostures; to those *Oracles, Auguries, Divinations, Magic, Witches, &c.* which have all flourished in their turns, and triumphed over the senses and reason of men, in every age and nation of the world.

This I may now augurate, with the greater assurance, not onely from the consciousness of my own conviction, grounded on an impartial inquiry into the case, but from the apparent weakness and impertinence of all the several Answers which have been published in contradiction to it. For tho' many things are urged in them with great confidence, which, to readers of little learning, may seem to charge me with ignorance or blunders or even willfull misrepresentation, all which I shall wipe off at once, whenever I find occasion to touch upon them; yet there is not a single argument in them all, which can reasonably be thought to invalidate, or in any degree to weaken the capital position of my book. So that, after all the violence of this attack, I find myself at liberty to affirm still, with the same conviction, what I affirmed originally in my Title page; *That we have no sufficient reason to believe, upon the authority of the Primitive Fathers, that any miraculous powers were continued to the Church, after the days of the Apostles.*

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Such an affirmation indeed from me, may justly be thought exceptionable; who am too much interested in the question to be considered as an equal Judge in it: but besides the confirmation, which it has received from the general voice of my readers, the public has seen a proof of it, superior to all exception, from the generous labors of two or three Clergymen, who, after a strict examination of the merits of each cause, have taken the pains to shew, by a strong and masterly force of reasoning, that the argument, both of *the Introductory Discourse*, and of *the Free Inquiry*, remains unhurt and unshaken, by all the studied cavils and subtil objections, which the most expert and zealous of my Adversaries have been able to alledge against it.

The persons, whom I mean, are utter strangers to me; and cannot be supposed therefore to have written out of any partial or personal regard to me; nor from any other motive indeed, but a sincere love of truth; since nothing else could have force enough to engage Clergymen in the defence of an opinion, openly decried and disgraced by those superiors through whose hands the rewards and honors of their profession are chiefly distributed. For though the cause of the *Free Inquiry*, be the cause of Protestantism itself, and what, above all things, tends to unite it's divided sects, and to strengthen it's common interests; yet, by a sort of policy not easy to be accounted for, the insinuations of a few peevish, narrow-minded, bigotted Churchmen have had weight enough to render it suspected and odious to the leaders of this free and protestant State.

It is not my design, in the present work, to enter into a minute discussion of the objections which may be found in all, or in any indeed, of the several answers to my *Free Inquiry*, but to select such only as seem to be worthy of any notice, or to carry any weight with them: and since the two Doctors, Dodwell and Church, appear to be the most applauded and relied upon by all, who profess any zeal for the cause which they defend, it shall be my chief business, to examine the merit of their performances, not omitting at the same time, to pay due respect to the rest, where-

ever I find them applying either the same argument with any new force, or a different one, which may afford any opportunity either of instruction or entertainment to the reader.

But before I descend to the examination of these particulars, it may be of use towards illustrating the general question, to premise a few observations on the present state of it, and to consider, how it now stands, after the correction, which it has received from the hands of these Inquisitors.

1. One of the objections, which I at first proposed to the reality of the Primitive Miracles, was this; that none of our writers, who maintained the continuance of them beyond the days of the Apostles, had ever been able to settle the bounds between true and false miracles, or to mark out, by any probable rule, the exact time when the true ceased, and the false began. So that a serious Inquirer into primitive antiquity must ever be perplexed with this doubt, that the pious reverence, which he comes disposed to pay to the supposed interposition of God, in this or that pretended instance of it, may be nothing else but the effect of credulity and superstition, and a criminal compliance with the frauds and fictions of men.

My Antagonists are very sensible of this difficulty; and have all in their turns, attempted to give some solution of it: but the vanity of their attempts, instead of removing, has confirmed it only the more, and shewn it to be inexplicable. For example; Mr. Jackson, who appeared the first, asserts the continuance of the miraculous powers no farther than to the time of *Origen*; by which he intimates his suspicion, of one half at least of the third Century. The second, an Anonymous Letter-writer, defends the subsistence of them, to the end of that century. Yet, even before that time, while he supposes the Church to be guided and guarded still by all it's miraculous powers, he declares it to have been greatly degenerated from it's original purity. Dr. Church confines his defence also to the three first centuries; not meddling with any miracles of a later date; nor yet determining, as he says, *on the one side or the other, either for their truth or their falsehood;*

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falsehood; but supposing, that among the many fabulous accounts of the succeeding ages, there might be a mixture still of some which were genuine. Dr. Dodwell considers the three first Centuries in general, as the proper period of true miracles, yet thinks it necessary still, to take in some share also of the fourth, as far as to the establishment of Christianity by the civil power; and for the rest, contents himself by saying; *that many wonderful works might probably be wrought afterwards for some great ends.* Mr. Whiston alone has ventured to launch out beyond the middle of this century; taking every thing for Gospel, that he meets with in the Church, till the heresy of Athanasius, as he calls it, by corrupting the pure stream of it's faith, provoked God to withdraw his gifts, and give it up to the wiles and delusions of Satan. Mr. Brooke, the last, and most voluminous of all these answerers, after a full deliberation on what the rest had severally offered, seems to prefer the opinion of the first, in restraining the period of undoubted miracles to the days of Origen: for though he declares them to have been withdrawn between the time of Origen and Chrysostom; yet he signifies his suspicion of all, which are later than the first, and affirms all to have been certainly forged, which are attested by the last of those Fathers.

This difficulty then, about fixing the era of the miraculous powers, continues still in it's full force, as a sort of presumptive argument, against the reality of any such powers after the days of the Apostles. But my Antagonists, after all their pains, to account for it, finding it at last a clog upon their system, which they are unable to remove, content themselves by dismissing it with an air of contempt, and declaring it, to be of no consequence at all; whereas if their hypothesis be admitted, that true and false miracles were promiscuously subsisting in the primitive ages, till the true happened, we know not when, nor how, to be finally withdrawn, nothing can be more certain, than that it would be of the greatest moment to us, to be able to separate the one from the other. For as true miracles must ever be wrought for some great and beneficial end, and the false on the contrary for some crafty and selfish end; so the one would lead

us of course to a religion worthy of God; the other into error and superstition, and a worship consequently offensive to him. But let us consider a little the nature of this hypothesis, which these Champions here maintain. They suppose, that true and false miracles were indiscriminately wrought at the same time, and in the same Church, without any rule of discerning the one from the other, till the true ceased, and the false prevailed: and that the Church continued ever after in that state, the perpetual dupe of false miracles, down to the time of the reformation. But nothing surely can be more absurd, than to imagine, that there ever was, or ever could be any such jumble and concurrence of true and false miracles in any age, or that the false especially should beat out the true, and the craft of the Devil supersede the power of God. For whatever coloring they may give to their hypothesis, and in what solemn words soever they may cloath it, that is the genuine consequence of it. Mr. Whiston indeed expresses it by saying; *that the forgeries of Athanasius by their prevalence in the Church provoked God to withdraw his miraculous powers*, and give it up to the delusions of Satan: yet the fact is the same, as it is affirmed by them all, that after an indiscriminate subsistence, or struggle as it were of true and false miracles, through a century or two, the true insensibly expired and the false onely remained. The absurdity of which notion, as it naturally flows from the cause which they defend, must yield a strong presumption in favour of my opinion, that, after the days of the Apostles, the miraculous pretensions of the succeeding ages, were all of the same kind; contrived by the craft of a few, and imposed upon the credulity of the many.

2. The reader will remember, that when I published *the Introductory Discourse*, I found our Divines, who were chiefly intrusted with the defence of our religion, against Infidels and Heretics, frankly asserting the continuance of the miraculous powers, not onely to the fourth, but to the fifth and sixth centuries, and ranking them all upon a level, with the very earliest after the days of the Apostles. My view therefore in that treatise, was to expose the extravagance of that bigotry; and give a check to the prevalence

of principles, which are absolutely fatal to the Protestant cause: and my attempt has had this clear effect, not onely of putting to shame and silence the rashness of those zealots, whom I then particularly attacked, but of making their successors in the present cause, so cautious and shy as we now see them, of touching even upon the fourth century. So that, if Dr. Chapman should once more think fit, to undertake the defence of Simcon Stylites, and his miracles, upon the illustrious authority of the Great Theodoret; or should a second *Berriman* affirm the divinity of that Creed, said to be delivered from heaven by the *Virgin Mary*, to *Gregory, the wonder-worker*, or insist again on the credibility of those Monkish tales, which are related of *Pope Gregory, the Great*, they would be hissed off the stage, even by their old friends; as the advocates of a superstition, too gross to deserve a moment's attention. Here then we see one great and manifest advantage actually gained to the Protestant cause, by the argument of the Free Inquiry; in clearing us at once, from the greatest part of that incumbrance which had hitherto clogged and blunted the vigor of our defence against Rome. For out of four successive centuries, to which the Divines of this Protestant Church were roundly ascribing all the kinds of miraculous gifts, and leading us insensibly into the very depths of Popery; the Free Inquiry, by the confession of all it's adversaries, has now freed us from the Impostures of two of them, or if we reckon to the time of Origen, of two and an half: and I make no doubt, but that, in the issue of this controversy, it will free us in the same manner, from the rest, how averse soever their advocates may be, to give them up, and whatever clamor they may raise about the consequences.

Since my Antagonists, who appear to have known nothing of the state of the prime miracles, but what they learnt from my book, which they now pretend to confute, have not yet learnt from it a right notion of the point in dispute between us: The position, which I affirm, is this; that after the days of the Apostles, no miraculous powers were continued to the Church, or the particular

cular members of it, as a standing proof of the truth of the Gospel, to which they might perpetually appeal for the conviction of the Heathens. This is what the Title of my work implies; what my whole reasoning turns upon; and what I have often signified in the course of it, to be my precise meaning. Yet these answerers treat my argument, as if it absolutely rejected every thing miraculous, whether that within the Church, by the agency of men, or any other occasions by the immediate hand of God. That God can work miracles, whenever he thinks fit, no body, I dare say, will deny: but whether he has wrought any or not, since the days of the Apostles, is an inquiry which I do not meddle with; the single point, which I maintain, is, *that the Primitive Church had no standing power of working any*. This distinction was seen at once by those writers, who have appeared in the defence of my argument; and who have justly reprov'd these Antagonists for their neglect of it, as being necessary to a right management of the controversy, as well as obvious to every reader [a]. Yet in defiance of this public admonition, we find them still declaring it, to be a mere evasion and subterfuge, never intended by me at first, but an after thought, contrived to elude the force of some objections, which were found to press me [b].

But tho' the distinction be just and clear, my view in marking it out, was not to derive any advantage from it to my cause, for I knew none, which it could give, but merely to shorten the dispute, and prevent impertinent wranglings, on facts and instances, which have no relation to it: and it is certain that, if a due regard had been paid to it, it would have saved my answerers some trouble in several instances of that sort; and especially in the story of *Polycarp's* martyrdom, on which they all now procede to exert their utmost pains and zeal, in defending the miracles, which are ascribed to it, as if they were decisive, and utterly subversive of the main position of my book: whereas in truth whatever be the real character of them, may be, they are nothing to the purpose,

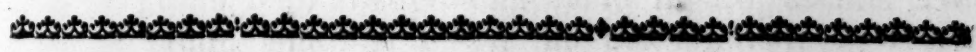
[a] Toll. 29. Lett. Def. 16.

[b] Ch. Pref. 8, 9.

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as being neither wrought by any standing power in the Church, nor carrying any evidence, that any such power was then subsisting in it.

But if these miracles have no relation, as I say, to the present dispute, it is asked, for what reason then did I introduce them into it? to which I answer, that it was for no other, than to expose the trifling and frivolous nature of them, and to shew, how fondly the Christians were disposed, in this very early and pious age, to give a miraculous turn to every unusual incident, which might happen to take place, on any important and affecting occasion. *****



Dr. *MIDDLETON*'s

LETTERS

TO

Mr. *WARBURTON*.



Ppp

DR. MIDDLETON

LETTERS

TO

MR. WARBURTON

PLP

LETTER I.

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Dorchester, Sept. 11, 1736.

S I R,

YOUR Candor, I hope, has already prevented me in suggesting some favourable Excuse for my long Silence. The Truth, which is always the best Apology, is, that I was absent from *Cambridge*, when your Letter arrived there; and though it was transmitted to me at this Place, yet it found me in no Condition to answer it, either to your Satisfaction or my own. I am here unprovided of *Tully's Works*, and without the Help of my Papers to furnish any Hints to me on the Subject; spending my Time suitably to the Taste and Temptations of the Country, in Cards at home, and Sports abroad; yet I could not longer defer to pay my Thanks at least for the great Entertainment, that it gave me; with Promise of further Payment, as soon as I am able.

The Point, that you undertook to make good concerning *Tully*, is, that *he did not believe a future State*. In Proof of which you maintain, that in *his Epistles onely*, of all his Works, we are to look for *his real Sentiments*.

This, tho' supported by you very ingeniously, is not, I own, agreeable to the Notion, that I had formed from my general Acquaintance with his Writings: And as I have not yet had Leisure to make it the Subject of a particular Enquiry, so at present I can onely give my loose and indigested Thoughts on the Matter; which I shall do very freely, and in the Method, that you have sketched out to me.

You assign four Reasons of the Difficulty of discovering *Tully's* Opinions on the important Questions of Philosophy. 1. The Character of the ancient Philosophy in general. 2. The manner in which the *Romans* received the *Greek* Philosophy. 3. The

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Nature

Nature of that Philosophy, which Tully espoused. 4. The peculiar Character of the Man.

1. By the first, you mean *the double Doctrine* of the old Masters; *the external, and internal*; the one for the Vulgar, the other for the Adept. But whatever Effect this had in Greece, where that Way of Teaching seems to have been drop'd long before Tully; it certainly had none in Rome, or at least in Tully's Writings: The End and Purpose of which was to explain to his Countrymen, in the most perspicuous Manner, whatever the Ancients had taught on every Article, either of speculative or practical Knowledge.

2. *The Romans*, you say, *were far from the Humour of the Greeks; and did not regard the Doctrine of the Sect, that they espoused, as a Rule of Life, but a kind of Furniture onely for their Rhetoric Schools.* But I see no Ground for this Distinction; if there was any between them, the Greeks were certainly the more disputatious, and, agreeably to St. Paul's Character of them, more curious and fond of *every thing new*. Cato, you see, from the Testimony, that you produce, made the *Stoical Doctrine his Rule of living*; and tho' he is laugh'd at for it by Cicero, yet not for making Philosophy his Rule, but that particular Philosophy, which was incompatible with common Life.

There is a Letter from Tully to Trebatius, upon his turning Epicurean; in which he rallies him for his new Principles, which must necessarily spoil the Lawyer, as breaking thro' all the old Forms of securing Faith and Property amongst Men: and concludes, *that if he was serious in the Change, he was sorry for it; if to make his Court onely to Panfa, he excused it.* (Fam. l. 7. 12.) This shews, that the Choice of a Sect was not thought a Thing indifferent, but supposed to operate in Life and Manners. If then, as Tully says, a great Part took up their Philosophy *disputandi causa, non ita vivendi*; yet this was not the Thing generally thought blameable. Nor was it peculiar to the Romans, any more than to the Greeks, or to any other People, *not to live up to the Rule, that they professed*; just as we see it now in the Case of

*intended by it
but on the con-
trary what was
generally*

of Religion, which a great Part in all Countries contend for very warmly, yet practise very coldly.

3. You make *the Nature of Tully's Philosophy* another Source of Difficulty in finding out his real Sentiments. His Philosophy was *of the Academy*; and whether of the old or the new, much the same. But when you call it *perfectly sceptical*, you seem to confound it with a different Sect, whose distinguishing Character was to *doubt of every Thing*: Whereas the Principle of the Academy was onely to *suspend their Assent*, till by examining all Sides of a Question, they could discover *the probable*. For in speculative Enquiries they disclaimed *all Certainty*; and thought nothing so unworthy of a Philosopher, as a *rash Assent*, and the embracing for true what he did not comprehend. They imagined Truth and Falshood to be so mix'd and blended by Nature, that it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to separate them entirely; that Probability was the utmost, that human Wit could arrive at. This therefore they made *their Rule*, both of thinking and acting. What the other Sects affirmed with Assurance, they made it their Task to confute or shew to be *uncertain*; taking from each still what they liked, and following it, with this Difference onely; that what the others called *true*, they called *probable*.

This, of all others, was the most rational Way of philosophizing; subjecting them to no Master, no System of Opinions; but leaving a Liberty to chuse, after a free Enquiry, whatever was found most agreeable to Reason and Nature. But what is there in this to create Difficulty in discovering a Man's Opinions, whenever he thinks fit to declare them? It might create, perhaps, some Diffidence in declaring them; and a Disposition, to confute rather what others assert, than to assert any Thing of his own: But their Rule still was as certain and consistent as of any other Sect; and when persuaded, of any Opinion, they pursued it as regularly, and explained as freely as any of the rest.

4. But the *Embarrafs*, you say, is compleated by the *peculiar Character of the Man*; which you consider in three different Capacities, of *the Orator, the Statesman, the Philosopher*; and contend, that

that he not onely contradicts in one, what he affirms in another, but is inconsistent with himself, even when he speaks from one and the same Person: Yet from the best Attention, that I have been able to pay to his History, I find in him but one general, consistent, glorious Character, of a great and good Man, acting and speaking on all Occasions, what the greatest Prudence with the greatest Virtue would suggest.

As an Orator, it was his Business to inforce, with all the Power of Eloquence, whatever he thought serviceable to his Client, and useful to the Cause, that he was defending. Of this Part he acquitted himself with Glory; and tells us himself, what the Nature of the Thing would tell us for him, that we are not to expect his real Sentiments here.

As a Statesman, the Case is still the same. In his Harangues to the People he gives a different Account, you observe, of the same Fact, from what he had done in the Senate; that is, he adapts his Style and Arguments to the different Genius of each Assembly; to engage them both the more effectually to promote the Measures, that he was then pursuing.

As a Philosopher; if we join the Character of an Academic, we shall find him equally consistent. For I cannot help agreeing with Bentley, in taking this for the Key of his philosophical Writings, as much as I do with you, in your fixing the Time of his changing the Academy. This was the Philosophy, that he profess'd through Life; and to which he professes himself indebted for all his Success in it: And this Clue will lead us through that Labyrinth of Contradiction, which you seem to discover in his Works.

In his Book of Divination, you say, he combats all Augury; but in his Book of Laws declares for it; in a manner too serious to suspect him of feigning. Yet all the Matter is, that in the one he acts the Philosopher; in the other the Statesman: In his Treatise on Divination, he asserts and establishes it in the first Book, in the Person of his Brother, by all the Arguments, that can be brought for it; and refutes them all in the second, in his own Person.

Person. This is the true Spirit of the Academy; after examining both Sides, to reject what has nothing solid in it. Yet in *his Treatise on Laws*, he recommends *Augury*; and no Wonder: for tho' he laughed at it as a Philosopher; he had a great Opinion of it as a Politician: And always speaks of *the Invention of its Ceremonies, and the making them Part of the civil Constitution, as an Instance of the greatest Wisdom and Prudence in their Ancestors*. For it was wholly agreeable to that Scheme of Policy, which he constantly pursued from the Beginning to the End of Life, of throwing the chief Influence and Balance of Power in State Matters into the Hands of the better Sort.

Again you take Notice, that in *his Book on the Nature of the Gods*, he reflects on those, as too curious or impertinent, who were calling upon him on all Occasions to declare his own Opinion: *Qui autem requirunt, quid quaque de re ipsi sentiamus, curiosius id faciunt, quam necesse est.* (l. 1. § 5.) yet in *his Academic Questions*, he swears, *that he always speaks what he thinks: Jurarem—me et ardere studio veri reperiendi, et ea sentire, quæ dicerem.* (l. 4. § 10.) In the first of these Works, he professes onely to collect what the old Philosophers had taught; and, according to the Method of the Academy, to combat the Opinion of one Sect, with that of another, without declaring his own: So that the Difficulty of discovering it is not owing here, as you intimate, to any obscurity in delivering it; but to his not delivering it at all. But in *the Academic Questions*, as far as I can understand the Passage without the Context to assist me, he does not swear, as you render it, *that he always speaks what he thinks*, but onely, *that he thinks what he is there speaking*: And if so, it confirms what I have been saying of the Academy, and its being *the true Key of his Sentiments*.

But you assert, *that his Sentiments are not to be collected from any of his Writings, that were designed for the Public, which include all but his Letters, because, in all his Writings of that Kind, he affected an Obscurity*. This is the first Time that I have ever seen the Character of *obscure* apply'd to *Tully's Writings*: Surely no Man's Style was ever farther removed from it, or more remarkably shining

ing and perspicuous, than his. But the whole Charge of Obscurity, and all the Contrast of Sentiments found in different Parts of his Works may easily be solved, by considering onely the different Circumstances, in which they were delivered. By attending to this, we shall find his very Contradictions to be Consistencies, and nothing else but what was prudent and proper to be said by one and the same Man; acting the different Parts of the *Orator, the Statesman, the Philosopher.*

To come then at last to the principal Point in question; the Discovery of *his real Thoughts concerning a future State, which are to be collected onely, you say, from his Epistles.* And so far I agree, that in familiar Letters we may expect to find him more open and undisguised, and as far as he touches any Subject, treating it with less Reserve, than in Works designed for the Public: Yet all his Letters, as you allow, are not of this Sort: In many of them it was his Business to say, not so much what was true, as what would please. But let us see what he has actually said in the Testimonies, that you have produced from them. In a Letter to *Atticus, (l. 4. 10.) Sed de illa ambulatione, fors viderit, aut si qui est, qui curet, deus.* To *Torquatus, (Ep. fam. l. 6. 3.) Sed hæc consolatio levis est: Illa gravior, qua te uti spero, ego certe utor: Nec dum ero, angar ulla re, cum omni vacem culpa: Et si non ero, sensu omnino carebo.* Again, (ib. 4.) *Deinde quod mihi ad consolationem commune tecum est, si jam vocer ad exitum vitæ, non ab ea republica avellar, qua carendum esse doleam, præsertim, cum id sine ullo sensu futurum sit.* To *Toranius, (ib. 21.) Cum consilio profici nihil possit, una ratio videtur, quicquid evenerit, ferre moderate, præsertim, cum omnium rerum mors sit extremum.* Nothing, you say, can be more express than these Passages against a future State: And that Tully speaks in them his real Sentiments, there is not the least room to doubt. They were Letters of Consolation to his Friends, when he himself, by Reason of the ill State of public Affairs, most wanted Consolation.

As to the first of these Passages; you allow it to be a Compliment to the Philosophy of his Friend *Atticus*, who was an Epicurean: And why is it not so too in the rest? In the first to *Torquatus,*

quatas, as in that to *Atticus*, the Case is put hypothetically *si non ero*: And the very Use of such a Topic in Consolation, implies, that these Friends also were Epicureans, and that he was administering Comfort from their Philosophy, not his own, as likely to have the more Weight with them; or arguing, as we say, *ad hominem*, not expressing his real Sentiments.

But as this is onely conjectural, and, as some may think, contrary to Fact; let us try what other Defence can be made, and what Use in this Case of our *Key of the Academy*. Though I have often reflected on these Passages, yet my Notion has always been, that *Tully did believe a future State*. The whole Turn of his Writings, and the Tenor of his Life shew it: He lived expecting it, and always, so as to deserve it; and declares it to be a *favourite Opinion*; which, though possibly an Error, he was resolved to indulge. But we must remember still, that he was an Academic; that is, that he believed it onely to be *probable*; and as Probability necessarily admits the Degrees of *more and less*, so it admits a Variety likewise in the Stability of our Persuasion: And as *Tully* himself says, on another Occasion, *quis autem est, tanta quidem de re, quin varie secum ipse disputet?* In a melancholy Hour, when the Spirits are low, and the Mind under a Dejection, an Argument appears in a very different Light; Objections acquire Strength; and what humours the present Chagrin, finds the readiest Admission. These Passages were evidently of this Kind, written in his desponding Moments; and, as you say, *when he himself most wanted Consolation*. And if we allow them therefore to express what he really thought at the Time, yet they prove nothing more, than that *he sometimes doubted of what he generally believed*; consistently with the Character and Principles of an Academic, who embraced *no opinions as certain*.

Thus, Sir, I have given you my free Thoughts on what you were so good as to communicate with regard to *Tully*: I will not be answerable for the Exactness of them; they are such onely as my Recollection could furnish, without the Help of *Tully's* Works to refresh, or any Testimonies to support them. But as I reserve

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the more exact Consideration of this Argument to the Part of Tully's Life, which was the most employed on Philosophy, under *Cæsar's* Tyranny, so I shall be obliged to you for imparting any further Thoughts on the Subject, either to confirm or confute what I have here offered: And if any Occasion of Books or Friends should invite you again this Winter to *Cambridge*, where I propose to be about *Michaelmas*, I beg you to be assured, that no Man will be more ready to serve you in any manner there, or better pleas'd to enjoy as much of your Company as your Time and other Friends will allow to,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

CONYERS MIDDLETON.

P. S. I should be glad to hear that your great Work goes on successfully; and as a sure Omen of satisfying others, that you find more and more Satisfaction from it yourself. When I was last in *London*, I met with a little Piece, written with the same View and on the same Plan with yours, An anonymous Letter from *Geneva*, evincing the divine Mission of *Moses*, from the Institution of the Sabbath Year. The Author sets out, like you, from this single Postulatum, that *Moses* was a consummate Lawgiver; and shews that he could never have enjoined a Law so whimsical, impolitic and hazardous; exposing the People to certain Famine, as oft as the preceding or following Year proved barren; if He, who has all Nature at command, had not warranted the Success of it. The Letter is ingenious and sprightly, and dresses out, in a Variety of Colours, the Absurdity of the Institution, on the Supposition of its being human. It is in *French*, and published in *Bibliothèque Germanique*, Tom. 30.

But will not this Gaiety of censuring the Law be found too adventurous, and expose your *Postulatum* itself to some Hazard? Especially when there is a *Fact*, generally allowed by the Learned,

ed, that seems to overturn all this specious Reasoning at once; viz. *that this Law of the Sabbath Year was never observed.* For if so, it may be objected, with some Shew of Reason, that *Moses* had charged himself with the Issue of Events too delicate, and beyond his Reach, and imprudently injoin'd what Use and Experience shewed to be impracticable.

I am apprehensive likewise, that your Work will not stand wholly clear of Objections: Your Scheme, as I take it, is to shew, that *so able a Man as Moses could not possibly have omitted the Doctrine of a future State, thought so necessary to Government by all other Legislators, had he not done it by the express Direction of the Deity; and that under the miraculous Dispensations of the Theocracy, he could neither want it himself for the enforcing a Respect to his Laws, nor yet the People for the Encouragement of their Obedience.* But what was the Consequence? Why the People were perpetually apostatizing either to the Superstitions of *Ægypt*, or the Idolatries of *Canaan*; and tired with the Load of their Ceremonies, wholly drop'd them at last, and sunk into all Kinds of Vice and Profaneness; till the Prophets, in order to revive and preserve a Sense of Religion amongst them, began to preach up the rational Duties of Morality, and insinuate *the Doctrine of a future State.*

As in the other Case then, some may be apt to say, that *Moses* had instituted what could not be practised without Ruin to the State; so in this, that he had overlooked, what could not be omitted without Ruin to Religion.

I have taken the Liberty to propose these Hints, that, if you think them of Weight, you may be better prepared to obviate them; if not, may proceed the more securely by seeing Reason to slight them. As for myself, I can safely swear with *Tully*, that I have *a most ardent Desire to find out the Truth*: But as I have generally been disappointed in my Enquiries, and more successful in finding what is false than what is true, so I begin, like him too, to grow a mere Academic, humbly content to take up with the *probable*. Whatever you have to offer me of this Kind, I shall

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thankfully embrace; and tho' I expect as much from you, as I do from any Man, yet in the arduous Subject, on which you are engaged, I dare not venture to raise my Expectations any higher.

L E T T E R II.

Cambridge, Nov. 30, 1736.

Dear Sir,

ON my Return to *Cambridge* my first and best Entertainment was to find a long Letter from you; which will ever give me Pleasure in proportion to its Bulk. I am much oblig'd to you for your friendly Acceptance and Construction of the Freedom with which I treated your Dissertation on *Tully's* Philosophy, as well as of what I ventur'd to intimate in relation to your greater Work. By your large View of both Subjects you have set me right in some particulars, which I had advanc'd too hastily and applied improperly; but I have neither Leisure nor Ability at present to enter into a detail of them, as well for the Arrear of Business in which a long Absence has involv'd me, as for a particular Disorder and Flux of Rheum in my Eyes, which disables me in great measure either from reading or writing, and makes it even difficult to discharge this present Duty towards you. I must refer my self for a free Discussion of all Particulars to that personal Conference, which you are so good as to promise some time after Christmas, which I shall enjoy with great Satisfaction and expect with equal Impatience.

I saw our friend *****, as I pass'd thro' *London*, whose Thoughts seem to be more employ'd on moral and religious Subjects, than on pushing his Fortunes in his Profession; in which I wish him all Success, for I take him to be an honest and deserving man. He professes himself a warm believer of Christianity;

I am

I am sorry that it is on no better Grounds, than what you mention: for it is in Opinions, as in Estates; our Possession gives a presumption of a good Title, till the Discovery of it oft betrays the Weakness of the Tenure. The Lives and Characters of the Fathers are more likely in my Opinion to shake a settled, than confirm a wavering Faith. For notorious Weakness will in many Cases discredit a Testimony as effectually, as notorious Wickedness: and we generally find but too much Reason, in the most esteemed of them, to charge either the one or the other. Our ingenious Friend ***** has, as you observe, rightly charg'd the source of Infidelity on the miraculous History of each Testament: yet our Divines are continually haranguing upon it, as reflecting nothing but Lustre and Brightness on the Evidences of both. But we need not wonder at the rashness of our ordinary Divines, when the great *Rogers* has declar'd, as I remember, in one of his Sermons, that he could not believe the Truth of *Moses's* Pretensions, were it not for the Confirmation given to them by the Gospel. This I take to be a dangerous Assertion, that saps the very foundations of Christianity; and supercedes at once the whole purpose of your intended Work, by denying any original or intrinsic Character of Divinity to the Institution of *Moses*. The Pleasure that I have in corresponding with many worthy and ingenious Friends in different Parts of the Kingdom, has oft suggested a Wish to me, that a Club cou'd be instituted of such, who are us'd to think, and able to write, for the Discovery and Defence of Truth on every Subject, that affects either private or public Life, without regard to any Party or Interest whatsoever. But the difficulty is to find a set of Men so independent and disinterested, as to be qualified to engage in such a Cause, or indeed to find a Society that would bear them. The Design however, in the corruption even of these Times, if executed with Prudence, and with due Respect to the Government and Constitution, might be of great Service towards mitigating the indiscreet fierceness and prejudices both of Zealots and Sceptics, which seem likely in some time to endanger the public quiet.

Coventry

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As to the Life of *Cicero*, I hope to get thro' the first rough Draught of it by the next Spring: but then to revise, correct, and digest it all to my Mind; and especially to read over all his Works, as I intend, for that purpose, will employ another year, before I can offer it to the public.

I hope your next Letter will bring the Confirmation of your promis'd visit to our University, and fix a short Day for our expecting you, where I shall always be proud to testify, that I really am, what I profess myself to be,

Dear Sir,

Your faithfull Friend

and Servant,

C. M.

LETTER III.

Camb. Apr. 9, 1737.

Dear Sir,

TH^{O'} I find my self in no small hurry on the approach of my Journey to *London*, whither I propose to set forward on *Monday* or *Tuesday*, yet I was resolv'd to snatch a moment for the payment of my thanks for your late obliging Letters, as well as the Journal, that came to my hands soon after the date of my last.—I had before seen the force of your critical Genius, very succesfully employ'd on *Shakespear*, but did not know that you had ever tried it on the *Latin* Authors. I am pleas'd with several of your Emendations, and transcrib'd them into the Margin of my Editions, tho' not equally with them all. It is a laudable and liberal Amusement, to try now and then in our reading, the Success of a Conjecture, but in the present State
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of the generality of old Writers, it can hardly be thought a Study, fit to employ a Life upon; at least, not worthy, I am sure, of your Talents and Industry, which instead of trifling on Words, seem calculated rather to correct the Opinions and Manners of the World.

As to the *Plain Account*; I heard *Whiston* say, that he told the Queen, that the Bishop did not understand the Nature of the Sacrament so well now, as when sixteen Years old. But for my Part, I have not, I own, so contemptible a notion of the Performance. We may observe thro' all ages, that there never was any rite or practice in the Church, deriv'd from the Gospel, that in the course of a few Years was not so perverted from its primitive use, as to want to be recall'd to its first Principles, and set right again by the original Rule. The Author takes this to be the Case of the Sacrament, and seems to have reason, not onely from the practice of this, but even of the earliest times of which we have any notice. For example. All his Adversaries appeal to *Justin Martyr*, who wrote within fifty Years of St. *John*, for a genuin Account of the matter. Yet in his time we find, that after Consecration, *the Deacons distributed the Bread and the Cup of Wine, mixt with Water, and carried Portions to the Absent.* [Apol. 1. p. 96. Edit. Thirl.] *Irenæus* declares *the mixture of Water*, to be the Institution of Christ himself [l. 4. c. 57. l. 5. 2. 36.] and when some afterwards began to dispute and reject it, *Cyprian* affirm'd it to be injoin'd to him by a *special revelation from Heaven* [Ep. ad Cæcil. 63.]. And *Theophylact* on his Comment on *John* 19. says *pudefiant Armenii, qui aquam non miscent.* This may shew how little we are to depend on Antiquity in the Case before us. I have no time to add more, but that I intend to return to *Cambridge* before the End of *May*, where I shall be heartily glad to receive you, and on all Occasions to signify, that I am, with great Truth, Dear Sir,

Sincerely Yours,

C. M.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Camb. Sep. 22, 1737.

Dear Sir,

I Began to be impatient to hear of your Health, and what you were doing, till I receiv'd your last kind Letter: and if there was Occasion for any Apology on your Part, it cou'd onely be, for not favouring me with it sooner. I shall always be desirous to shew any Respect to your Friends; for that Character with me will be a sure Proof of their Merit: but Dr. *Taylor* seems to be one of those few, who want no Testimonial, and whose ingenuous Behaviour and Conversation will easily recommend him to the Esteem of Men of Sense. Pray let him know, that I think my self oblig'd to him for his kind Remembrance of me, and shou'd be glad of any Opportunity of cultivating his Friendship.

The Life of *Cicero* proceeds but slowly, thro' many Interruptions and Avocations: I had an unexpected one lately, by sudden call to *London*, to look after the Mastership of the Charter-House; having been mention'd for it, without my Application; by Sir *Robert*, and some other Great ones: but on my Arrival in Town I presently perceiv'd, that the D. of *Newcastle* had been before hand with them, in securing it for one Mr. *Mann*, an old Friend and Companion of *Ld. Godolphin*. So that I return'd, as I have been forc'd to do before, with a few good Words from those, who can as easily give good Things. I have made however a considerable Progress in my Work; and am drawing it out into a legible Form; and at your next Visit to us, hope to give you a Perusal of the whole, or at least of a great Part of it. But as I find some Difficulty in pleasing my self with it, I shall not be in hast to send it abroad; tho' whenever I do publish, am still inclined,

clined, as you, and other Friends have advised me, to print it by Subscription.

I promise my self in the mean Time much Entertainment from your first Volume: and if you carry it to the Press yourself, shall expect that you make *Cambridge* your Way, and take up your Quarters with us; where on all Occasions you will be as welcome as at home, and for any time, that you find convenient. I am pleased with the manner of your Address to the Free-thinkers, and obliged to you for your friendly Intentions with regard to my self: and tho' I shou'd be as proud to have the testimony of your Judgement and good Opinion as of any Man, yet I wou'd have you consider, how far such a Declaration of it may expose you to a share of that Envy, which has lain and still lies very heavy upon me.

I have never once look'd into the Review, &c. the Maxim, that you mention from it, is agreeable to the Principles of the Author, and to make Possession and Establishments a Test of Truth, the sure way to banish Reason and Inquiry out of Society. If from particular and national Societies, we extend his Rule to the universal one of Mankind, what wou'd become of Christianity itself, if a majority or novelty must be the criterion of true and false? we shou'd have nothing left, but to join with *Tindale*, and maintain it to be *as old as the Creation*.

I am, Sir,

Your affect. Friend

and Servant,

C. M.

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LETTER

LETTER V.

Feb. 8, 1737-8.

Dear Sir.

I Deferr'd my Thanks for your last obliging Letter, till I cou'd pay them at the same Time for the kind Present which you there promis'd, and which I have since receiv'd. But I have been forc'd still to deferr them much longer than I intended, by a cruel Disorder of my Eyes which seiz'd me unluckily just before the Publication of your Book, and quite disabled me from reading it; tho', by the help of borrow'd Eyes, I have at last got through it. When *Tully's* Writings were first spread through the World after his Death, a Spring broke out in one of his favourite Villas, which was found excellent for weak Eyes, and thought to be providentially supply'd to assist towards the reading of his Works. I wish that Providence, in whose Cause you are more specially engag'd, had furnish'd the same help to facilitate the Lecture of your Writings. I flatter my self however that my Blindness is not of the Judicial kind; since no Man, I'm sure, was either more desirous to read, or more willing to be convinc'd by you than my self; and tho' by my unhappy Disability I have lost some Share of the Pleasure, and perhaps of the Conviction, which I shou'd otherwise have receiv'd from your Book, yet I resolve to make it up by a more considerate and attentive Perusal, as soon as my Eyes will allow me: I beg leave in the mean while to assure you, that I found it very entertaining, very ingenious, very learned.

This wou'd be Satisfaction enough to the generality of Authors, whose end of writing is not so much Truth, as Praise: But that, I know, was not your's, or at least your primary End; for a Writer of your Genius will be allow'd without that Imputation, to en-

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liven a dry Subject with the Embellishments of Learning. I have the Pleasure also to tell you, that I'm exactly of your Mind in your Notion of *moral Obligation*; as well as in the two capital Propositions of your Book, *that the Doctrine of a Future-State is highly useful to Society*; and *that Magistrates have always inculcated it for the sake of that Utility*. How much farther you will carry me I cannot promise, I wish it may be to the End; if not I shall not charge it either to your Fault, or my own: For we are told by great Authority, *that it is as necessary for the Mind to yield to the Evidence of what it perceives, as the Balance to the Weight*; and *impossible for it not to judge of Things accordingly as they appear to it*; and we learn from daily Experience, that different Tempers and Capacities form different Judgements of the same Thing: so that while my academic Complexion leaves me groveling perhaps in the mire of Doubt, or pursuing the faint Track of Probability, your more sanguin Spirits, like the greater Mysteries, make you at once an *Autoptes*, and admit you to the joyous Regions of clear Day and Intuition. But I cannot help attending to what, as *Cicero* tells me, a *Sicilian Wagg Epicarmus* whispers, *Be on your guard, and do not believe, for these are the Nerves of your Mind*: But lest you shou'd suspect that I follow onely Pagan Authority, *Clemens of Alexandria* quotes the same Passage, and adds either from himself, or perhaps some better Writer, that *Incredulity has done much good in the World, Credulity much Evil*.

But to return to your Book, as I have told you with great Truth that it pleases me in general very highly, so I think it the Part of a Friend to acquaint you with some little Objections, which I have either heard from others, or observ'd to it my self. Some take Notice that you treat the Free-thinkers too roughly, and that your Address to them is a Defiance rather and Declaration of War, than an Invitation to a Conference; not likely therefore to conciliate their Favour or Attention, which ought to be the Care of one who professes to write for their Conviction.—*Ld. Shaftsbury's* Raillery on Mr. *Locke* does not seem strange to me; a Philosopher, who at parting with Life, has nothing to preach but *it's Vanity*,

certainly makes a poor Figure, by shewing that he was deceiv'd in the End, and mistaken in the Use of it; and not that Life itself, but that his Pretensions to Philosophy were vain.—We are at a Loss to know, why you rank the *Old-Whig* among the *Infidel-Writers*; we consider him as writing onely on dissenting Principles, against Tests and Establishments, and suppose C——r or F——r to be the Editor, who have not been thought Enemies to Reveal'd Religion. For want of taking Notes in running thro' your Book, and the present bad State of my Eyes, I cannot recover the Passages, where I seem'd to stick a little; I shall mention therefore but one or two which my Memory supplies. You will be censur'd perhaps for condemning the fam'd Passage of *Josephus* so roundly, upon a Principle, which will hardly be found to be true, viz. *the unsociable Nature of that Religion, not allowing a Communion with any other*. But *Whiston*, you know, makes *Josephus a Christian-Bishop*, and though you will laugh here at the old Man, as I my self also do; yet what will you say to the uncontested Testimony of Ecclesiastical History, which asserts that all the first Christian Bishops of Jerusalem, thro' a perpetual Succession of 15 to the final Destruction of the City by Hadrian, were circumcised Jews.

By emending a Passage of Tully, you make him condemn the ignorance of their Ancestors, and Superstition of the Priests in the Establishment of their Religion; and refer to it afterwards as to a Sense allow'd and certain; yet as far as I can remember of his real Sentiments and constant Professions thro' all his Writings, he perpetually applauds the wise Institution of their religious Rites, as admirably adapted to the Genius of their Government and Service of the State. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your faithfull Friend

and Servant,

C. M.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Camb. Nov. 18. 1738.

Dear Sir,

I Am oblig'd to you for your kind Inquiry after my Health; my Eyes are somewhat better than they have been, which is no small Comfort in my present Task of writing; but in truth I may thank my self in great Measure for what I suffer from them, and while I am teizing them every Day beyond their Strength, cannot reasonably complain, if they often make me smart for it. I have been thinking however sometimes to try the Experiment which you advise, and desire therefore at your leisure to have the Receipt of your Tobacco; tho' *ex fumo dare lucem*, seems to be an Attempt too bold for one of my Age. I have now an Amanuensis with me transcribing my *Tully*, and might be ready for the Press in the Spring, cou'd I prevail with my self to part with it so soon; if I keep it still longer, it is not because I am fond of it, but because it does not yet please me, for whenever it does, I shall be glad to get rid of it. My Friends in the mean while begin to be pressing for it, and advise a Subscription, to which I seem now determin'd, especially as I have got an additional Charge upon me since I saw you, two small Girls, about eight Years old, who are now in the House with me, left by an unfortunate Brother, who had nothing else to leave; but they are fine Children, and have gained already so much upon our Affections, that instead of being a Burthen, we begin to think them a Blessing to us; my Subscription therefore is like to be of the charitable kind, and *Tully* to be their Portion. I begin to think of printing at this Place, where it will be most convenient to me, and where we have a Syndicate on Foot to regulate the Press, and bring it again into Credit and Order; and my

Neighbour

Dr. MIDDLETON'S LETTERS

Neighbour *Thurlborn*, whom I am dispos'd also to oblige, has been making Proposals to me. But I shall not think of taking any Resolution, till I can compute the Size and Charge of printing my Work, and see a little forward into the List of Subscribers; as far as I can guess at present, it will make a large Volume in 4^{to}, which being handsomely printed may demand a Guinea for the Subscription Price. You will never be forgiven for your Preference of the INTERNAL Evidence, for that brings Reason into the Controversy, which our old Champions wou'd gladly discard, finding Testimony and Authority, like the Cudgel or Quarterstaff, the surest Weapons to beat off, or knock down an Adversary. But I did not expect to hear that Bishops begin to rank you on the Side of the Enemy, tho' nothing is strange from such a Bishop, who has just Learning enough to make his want of Sense onely the more conspicuous. — I wish that you wou'd spend some Part of the Winter among us at *Cambridge*, where I shou'd be glad to have your Judgement on the several Parts of *Cicero's* Life; we keep up a regular Meeting every Night at the Coffee-House, which is the onely Hour which I spend agreeably out of my own House; Mr. *** who charges me to repay his Compliments, adds no small Life to the Company, but the Pleasure of it wou'd be much heightened by the Benefit of your Conversation. My Amanuensis leads me on so fast that I can hardly keep Pace with him, if I give him any Start; for as he writes, I revise, and insert all the Authorities. I can only add our joint good Wishes for your Health and Prosperity, and am with great Truth,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend

and Servant,

C. M.

LETTER

L E T T E R VII.

Camb. Sept. 4, 1739.

Dear Sir,

I Should have paid my Thanks long ago for your last kind Letter, but that I have been extremely busy, and still am so in finishing my Book for the Press, whither I shall certainly commit it, about the Middle of the next Month. I am obliged to you for my Rt. Revd. Subscriber, and the more so, for the Pains that it cost you to draw him in. Episcopal Gold, like that from the Royal Hand, may help to cure the Evil, with which I am said to be infected. I have now got f'teen of that Bench, one or two of whom were even my Solicitors but cou'd not persuade some of the rest, that my Work was not levell'd against Religion. This Notion has been strongly inculcated, and when in the Conversation, that I mention'd (with the A. B.) I took occasion to urge the Folly as well as Malice of it, it was answer'd, that tho' it might prove false, yet it did not appear to be malicious, since the *Life of Homer* might justly give a Handle to suspect the *Life of Tully*.

I can easily imagine, that you have suffered in the Opinion of that Person, and many others of the same Stamp, for your charitable Opinion of me; but the free manner with which you treat certain Characters and Opinions, which pass for sacred with all such, is your fundamental and unpardonable Crime, and the rest but overt Acts of a secret Malice and mischievous Intent in it. You despise that Roundness of their Systems, into which they have collected all the Substantials of Religion, and by breaking thro' the Circle threaten to dissolve the Charm. How can a Prelate, who in his primary Visitation made it his Care to recommend
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the *Miscellany* to all the Clergy, ever relish an Author of your Genius, whose End as well as manner of Writing is just the reverse of that Scribbler's, to pursue Truth, where-ever you find it, and from the midst of Smoak and Darkness to spread Light and Day around you? You will hardly mend the matter, as you say, by defending Mr. *Pope*; for tho' it be an Act of Justice, and a Task of all others the most laudable to defend a shining Character when injuriously attacked, and tho' it will shew the Ingenuity, Learning, and good Taste of the Author, yet it will not be thought a clerical Work, such as your *St—s* and *Cb—s* attempt, all whose polemical Fire and Artillery are levell'd against the Enemies of the Church; and a stupid Book against *Morgan*, or a Defence of the Fathers, especially where they cannot be defended, are the sure Means of making a Man first a Chaplain, and at last perhaps an Arch-bishop. No, my Friend, as long as you can love a Man, because he is amiable, and think him honest, who is not perhaps Orthodox, or a lover of Truth, who hates a pious Fraud and sanctified Lie, you may enjoy the Comfort of a good Conscience and good Company, but must not expect after a Life of Virtue and Study to slumber in the Stalls and refresh your old Age in the Sunshine of the Church. Pray present our best Wishes and Compliments to Dr. *Taylor*, whether married or unmarried, and accept the same to yourself from,

Dear Sir,

Your faithfull

and obedient Servant,

C. M.

LETTER

L E T T E R VIII.

Camb. Jan. 7, 1739-40.

Dear Sir,

I Have been a shamefull Time in your Debt for a kind and agreeable Letter, for which I have no other Excuse to make, but that I have been forced of late to take the same Liberty with all my Friends, and content my self with the less honorable Part of receiving Favors instead of giving.

I thank you for the Present of your Vindication of Mr. Pope, which my Wife read over to me with much Pleasure to us both, and with that Satisfaction which your Works will always give your Friends of seeing you triumph over your Adversaries. — You have evinced the Orthodoxy of Mr. Pope's Principles, but like the old Commentators on his *Homer*, will be thought perhaps in some Places to have provided a meaning for him, that he himself never dreamt of. However if you did not find him a Philosopher, you will make him one, for he will be wise enough to take the Benefit of your Reading, and make his future Essays more clear and consistent. It was certainly a generous Part in you, and worthy a Man of Capacity and Leisure to vindicate a Writer of his Genius, to whom the Public is so highly indebted from the groundless Cavils of a dull Critic, which Mr. Pope's Name and not his own had spread into every body's Hands. I have been employing my self very diligently on the last Part of my Work, the Review of *Cicero's* Character and Opinions, &c. where as it seemed to fall in my way to say something by way of Note on the Article you wrote of, so I have taken the Opportunity of saying what I think sufficient, yet no more than what the Subject naturally led me to. I think you much in the right to take no farther Notice of *W—r* you have done him too much honor already by

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Dr. MIDDLETON'S LETTERS

letting him see that he can warm you. But I shall not be displeased to see you give the whole Tribe of them that just Correction in your Preface, which your masterly Hand is so well able to dispense. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

C. M.

L E T T E R IX.

May 8, 1740.

Dear Sir,

I Am oblig'd to you for the favor of your kind Letter, and much pleas'd with your excursion to *Twickenham*, which abounds with every thing, I know, that can make the Scene agreeable to a Man of Taste, both within and without Doors. I thank you for doing me Justice to Mr. *Pope* and Mr. *Littleton*, and representing me in that very Light, in which I desire and shall ever endeavour to appear to Men of Probity and good Sense, of what Party soever they may be; for I am persuaded, that there are such Men to be found in all Parties. I do not recollect how I cou'd ever answer an Invitation from Mr. *Pope* in a slight manner, whose Character would make such a Behaviour ridiculous in any Man. I have always had a very high Opinion of his shining and singular Abilities; but from the Prejudices, conceiv'd against me by many of his Friends, on the Account of my Writings, as well as my Engagements to *Ld. Hervey*, I have had Reason to believe, that he also has been induced, to think me less worthy of his good Opinion, than he had once imagined. I am sorry for your particular

ticular Loss in Bp. *Hare*, whom I have always taken to be a real Encourager of Learning, as well as a learned Man; a Character, that will not easily be replaced on that Bench. But the Comfort is, that Learning is a Branch of Virtue, that never fails to carry its Reward with it; of which you have such a Share, as you wou'd not exchange, I dare say, for the best Preferment in the Kingdom. This is a Satisfaction, which I feel every Day in my Study, in the want of all Preferment; that I can live after my own Way, without attending Levees, and exposing my self to Disappointments, or sacrificing, what is of all things the most precious to a declining Life, my Time to a vain Ambition. The elder Mr. *York*, with his Tutor *Salter*, left us suddenly upon a Summons to Town, where you will probably take an Opportunity to wait upon him. Pray contrive to see us on your Return, and spend as much Time with us as you can, where you may assure yourself of being always heartily welcome to, Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend

and Servant,

C. M.

LETTER X.

Camb. Jan. 8, 1740-1.

Dear Sir,

THE short Day which my Bookseller has fixt for the Publication of my *Cicero*, has thrown me into no small Hurry, to provide all things ready on my Side before the End of this Month; I hear from all Friends, that you are not less assiduous in pushing forward your Work, and as I propose

pose to be in *London* in *February*, heartily wish, that it may be in such forwardness, as to call you thither also about the same Time.

Our People here have just got some Notice of my Letter to the A—B—p which is spread as usual thro' the University. His Grace, it seems, shewed it lately to Dr. M—y who gave a particular Account of it to a Fellow of *Sidney*, but with no Intimation of any Reflection made upon it either by his Grace or the Doctor, which is the whole that I have yet learnt of it. My first Comfort is, from the Reserve observ'd about it, after shewing it to Enemies, that they are at a Loss how to draw any thing from it to my Disadvantage, and for the rest, I am perfectly easy. —The Church has receiv'd a great Loss by the Death of Dr. W—d. I cannot say, an irreparable one, whilst C—n lives; to whom he has left some unfinish'd Papers on *Infant Communion*, and wisely order'd all the rest to be burnt; he has bequeathed likewise to the College, such of his printed Books, as they find scribbled by his own Hand, for such, I hear, is his own Description of them. By the Silence of the public Papers upon the fall of so eminent a Luminary, we are to expect, I imagine, in a proper Time some labored Panegyric from a masterly Hand. Tho' the great *Hooker* seems to have exhausted himself in an Effort of the last Week to do Justice to the Character of the excellent *Eusebius*, who is preparing to give the *Coup de grace* to that subtle and ingenious but infamous Writer, the moral Philosopher.—But as to W—d whenever they think fit to oblige the Public with his Life, they will not forget one Story, I hope, which is truly worthy of him, and shews the real Spirit of the Man, and which I can venture to tell you on good Authority. In his last Journey from *Cambridge* to *London*, being attended by Dr. P———e and C——n the Surgeon, he lodged the second Night at *Hodsdon*, where being observ'd to have been costive on the Road, he was advis'd to have a Clyster, to which he consented. The Apothecary was presently sent for, to whom Dr. P———e gave his orders below Stairs, while Dr. W—d continued above; upon which the Apothecary
could

cou'd not forbear expressing his great Sense of the Honor, which he receiv'd, in being call'd to the Assistance of so celebrated a Person, whose Writings he was well acquainted with; the Company signified some Surprize to find a country Apothecary so learned; but he assur'd them, that he was no Stranger to the Merit and Character of the Doctor, but had lately read his ingenious Book with much Pleasure, *The Divine Legation of Moses*; Dr. P——e and a Fellow of *Magdalen* there present, took Pains to convince the Apothecary of his Mistake, while C——n ran up Stairs with an Account of his Blunder to W——d who provoked by it into a violent Passion, call'd the poor Fellow a Puppy, and Blockhead, who must needs be ignorant in his Profession and unfit to administer any thing to him, and might possibly poyson his Bowels; and notwithstanding Dr. P——e's endeavours to moderate his Displeasure, by representing the Expediency of the Operation, and the Man's Capacity to perform it, he wou'd hear nothing in his Favor, but order'd him to be discharged, and postpon'd the Benefit of the Clyster till he reach'd his next Stage. With such wretched Passions and Prejudices did this poor Man march to his Grave, which might deserve to be laugh'd at, rather than lamented, if we did not see what pernicious Influence they have in the Church, to defame and depress Men of Sense and Virtue who have had the Courage to despise them.

I am with true Esteem and our joint Wishes of many happy Years,

Dear Sir,

Your affect. Friend

and Servant,

C. M.

LETTER

L E T T E R XI.

Camb. Apr. 5, 1741.

Dear Sir,

I Returned to *Cambridge* on *Friday* last, where I had no sooner been welcomed by the affectionate Salutations of my Family than I receiv'd the additional Pleasure of your kind Letter. I was quite tired of the Town before I left it, and called sometimes at *Gyles's* in hopes of being refreshed by the expectation of your Arrival, but you resolve, I perceive, to make your Appearance first by Proxy, and to oblige the World, with the Entertainment, which it impatiently expects, from the Publication of your second Volume; to which I heartily wish all the Success, that you desire, or what, I am perswaded, is still more, all that it will really merit. — I am oblig'd to you for your Congratulation on the favorable Reception of my Work, which has answered indeed all my Wishes, and you will readily believe, that I esteem it as a particular Honour, that it has merited the Approbation of your Friends Mr. *Pope* and Mr. *Littleton*, with whom I spent a very agreeable Afternoon at Mr. *Murray's*, where they both joined in strong Expressions of their Friendship and Esteem of you. As to the Circumstance, from which you draw so just and usefull a Lesson, of our differing from each other in some particular Opinions, as I was always perswaded, that it cou'd not have any other Effect upon you, so I have the Comfort to assure you, that I never felt the least Impression from it disadvantageous to our Friendship; it is the necessary Consequence of that Privilege of our Nature, on which all Men of Sense set the highest Value, the Liberty of judging for ourselves; yet since it wou'd be a great Satisfaction to me in all Cases to find my Judgement confirm'd by

yours,

yours, so when you are at full leisure I shou'd be glad to know the particular Reasons which force you to differ from me on the Subject of *Cicero's* Opinions, to which alone our Difference in the present Case is to be referr'd, that as far as is possible we may come still nearer to each other.

We have been alarmed in the Univerfity for some Days past by an Opposition declared against Mr. *Finch*, but it is now dropt, and we shall chuse our old Member again to-morrow.

As soon as I can sit down again to my Books, I shall prepare a new Edition of my Letter from *Rome* in 8vo, enlarged with a prefatory Answer to a Popish Writer, who has animadverted upon it, where I shall take Occasion to explain my Sentiments more explicately with regard to my Belief of the Scriptures, in a manner proper to satisfy all reasonable and candid Readers, and for the rest, it wou'd be a Weakness in me to expect or desire that I shou'd ever satisfy them. I shall depend on your paying us a Visit either as you go or return from *London*, for I have many things to talk over with you, which I cannot commit to Letter. I desire you to make my Compliments to Dr. *Taylor*, with my Thanks for all his Favors, and to assure you that I am with the greatest Truth,

Dear Sir,

Your sincere Friend

and faithful Servant,

C. M.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Camb. Oct. 22, 1741.

Dear Sir,

YOUR obliging Letter found me at *Hildersham* where I spent the Autumn with my Family, and where the Amusements of the Country and the Necessity of reforming a rude Farm into a tolerable Habitation engrossed my Time and Thoughts so intirely, as to leave me neither Leisure nor Inclination indeed to take a Pen in Hand for any other Purpose but to draw Plans and settle Accounts with my Workmen. I return'd to *Cambridge* on *Saturday* last, and have taken my Seat again in my Study, where it shall be my first Task to pay my Debts to all my Friends for their Favors not yet acknowledg'd, and especially to yourself, whose Letter I assure you, gave me a particular Pleasure, as it furnished a fresh Proof not onely of your Candor and good Temper, but of your Friendship also to me; and whenever you may find Occasion, as you intimate, to publish any Observations upon my Postscript, I make no Doubt, but that you will give the Public the same Reason to applaud your Moderation, and set them such a Pattern, of what we call polemical Writing, as ought to be copied by all Men of liberal Education. But whenever you think fit to give yourself that Trouble, you will remember, that the Point, which you assert, and the single Point contested in the Postscript, is, that the Papists, or the Introducers of those Rites, which we call Popish, had no View or Reference to Paganism in the Introduction of them, and that in fact there were none of them introduced, while there were any Pagan Prejudices subsisting among Christians. If you make out this Point, (and nothing less can be thought to justify, what you declare

declare in the Paragraph referr'd to by me,) you will have the Credit of discovering a Truth, unknown, I believe, before to the learned World. I am far from imagining, that you had the least Intention of discrediting any Argument against Popery, which you took to be a good one, and I may perhaps have said too much, in charging your Opinion with overthrowing *the Use* of my Book; but it must needs hurt *the Credit* at least of a Work, that has been well receiv'd, to inform the Public that it is grounded at last on a Mistake; and tho' it may happen to wound the Papists, that it hits them, as it were onely by Chance. You take Notice, that what you have said on the Question in Difference between us, was essential to your Argument, but I can assure you, that it was the general Opinion of all my Acquaintance, who reflected upon it, that you had stept out of your Way, to give a Blow to the Assertors of the Paganism of *Rome*, and for that very Reason were not so clear and connected in the Conclusion of that Section, as in the rest of your ingenious Work. I am much pleased, that any Part of my late Performance can deserve your Approbation, and especially those Pages which you mention. I was ever ready to have given the same Satisfaction, when it should fall naturally in my Way, and belonged to my Subject, as I told you, I remember, when you were so kind as to advise me to it, but I cou'd not submit to do it, on the Demand of a *V—n* or a *W—r*, which wou'd have expos'd me onely to fresh Censure and a more reasonable Suspicion of me. I am glad to hear, that any Occasion will call you to Town this Winter; you call it indeed a ridiculous one, but if I guess it aright, it may one Day produce something serious to your Advantage. For as Times now go, *Horace's* Rule of Comic Wit, may not improperly be applied to our Conduct in Civil Life, and the ridiculous Part do your Business more effectually than all the Merit of your graver Character. *Ridiculum acri fortius ac melius*, &c. I received lately a very friendly Letter from Dr. *Taylor*, for which I desire you to pay him my Thanks and Compliments till I find Leisure, which I want at present, to acknowledge it my self. Mr. *Tunstall* carried his

T t t

Election

Dr. MIDDLETON's, *three* LETTERS

Election yesterday more clearly than was imagined, by a Majority of 23, his Number of Votes being 160. I beg your Acceptance of our joint Wishes of Health and Happiness to you, and am with true Respect,

Dear Sir,

Your affect. Friend
and Servant,

C. M.

Three Letters of Dr. MIDDLETON's to
another of his Friends.

L E T T E R I.

Cambridge, Nov. 19, 1747.

Dear Sir,

I Have been so particularly engaged ever since I was favored with yours of the 5th Instant, that I have not found leisure till now, to thank you, as I should otherwise have done much sooner, for your clear and distinct Account of Dr. D—n's Book, which was very agreeable to me, as it is an actual Exemplification of the Argument of the *Introductory Discourse*.

I have formerly been acquainted with several Non-Jurors of distinguish'd Learning in this University, whom I always perceiv'd to be fond of the same Principles, which you have extracted from these *Catechisms*; and to be arriv'd so near to the Confines of Popery, as if they were prepar'd to step into it again, whenever a proper Occasion should intervene; which many of them would defend, as a more eligible Step, than an Union with

any other Protestant Sect, as being more remote still from the Primitive Pattern. These Principles I could never digest, from the Time when I began to think and judge for my self; and they gave me the first Disgust to what was then sanctified by the Title of Orthodoxy. Nor has the Authority of those ancient Fathers, from whom they are derived, alter'd my Opinion of them; nor can any Authority indeed ever persuade me to receive as sacred and divine, what my Sense and Reason declare to be absurd and superstitious. Yet this is the Religion, which Primitive Antiquity recommends to us. But it is a Comfort to observe, as well of our Clergy, as the Laity, that they are generally become more easy and moderate in their Notions of Religion, than they have formerly been, from that more free and natural way of expounding its Doctrines, which has obtained of late years, not onely in the established Church, but in all the prudent and sensible Part of our Protestant Sects; who all seem now to agree in making our common Sense and Reason the genuine Test and Measure of our common Faith; which is the onely Way to preserve any Peace or Charity among Christian Societies. This good Fruit will be improved still, I dare say, by the Choice of our new Archbishop; I may say, of the two Archbishops, who seem both to be of a Character quite opposite to the last; Men of an open and candid Disposition, and Lovers of Liberty both religious and civil.

As to the Expectations, which you mention, from me, I have promised a Work indeed to the Public, of which I will not disappoint it; but cannot tell as yet, in what Time I shall be able to send it abroad. Expectation is an Adversary, against which I must guard it with the more Care; and the Argument is important, which will require therefore the greater Attention, and the Alarm, which it seems to have given to many, will oblige me to clear it of all Offence, except such, as plain Fact and Truth may possibly give: And let that reach as far as it will I shall have no Concern for the Consequences.

In the mean while I should be glad, if you can send me any Information relating to the Subject, or any thing, which you may

Dr. MIDDLETON's three LETTERS

have heard worth Notice concerning the Sentiments or Apprehensions of Men of Sense about it; and when you pass by *Manby's* Shop, I desire, if *D——n's* Book be sold in Town, that you would order him to send it to, *Dear Sir,*

Your affectionate

and faithfull Servant,

C. M.

L E T T E R II.

Camb. Decem. 15, 1748.

Dear Sir,

I Am ashamed to find my self so late in acknowledging the Favour of your last obliging Letter, and the literary Notices, which you therein furnished for the Use of my Book. But I beg you to be assured, that the Tardiness of my Thanks did not procede from any Disregard to you, for whom I have long conceived a very just Esteem; nor yet from any slight Opinion of the Authorities, which you had collected; but from my own Indolence and Disinclination to writing Letters, contracted by the Interruption, which it gives to my few Hours of Study, and the Difficulty, which it creates to my weak Eyes, which will not suffer me to write or read what is necessary to the Task, to which I have devoted the Remainder of my Days, of informing my self, as well as I am able, of any thing, that is right and good, and of communicating that Information to the Public, as being the sole Way, which my Condition of Life has opened to me, of doing any good in the World, or making a proper Use of these slender Talents, with which Providence has intrusted me.

As to your Authorities, tho' I made no Use of them in my Work, which was quite finished before they reached me; they may probably be of Service hereafter, for the Defence and Confirmation

tion of my Argument against the Cavils of Adversaries, will not fail to attack it where-ever they can find a weak point; as I am not so vain, as to think, that any Performance of mine can be clear of several Parts of that sort. I should be very glad to hear your free Sentiments upon it, as well as what Reception it meets with elsewhere; and especially what Objections are made by Men of Sense to my Part, where it is thought defective in matter of Proof or Probability.

The Duke of Newcastle was yesterday elected our Chancellor with great Chearfulness and Unanimity. Dr. Whalley, our Regius Professor of Divinity, died the Night before of an Apoplectic Case, in which he lay convulsed for a Day or two. The Candidates mention'd for the vacant Professorship are Dr. Paris, Master of Sidney College, Mr. Green, Fellow of St. John's, and Mr. Young of Trinity, our public Orator, all of them Men of good Merit and Principles. I am, with great Truth,

Dear Sir,

Your faithfull Friend

and Servant,

C. M.

LETTER III.

Jan. 16, 1748-9.

Dear Sir,

YOUR Letter of the 10th Instant gave me no small Satisfaction, by assuring me of the general Concurrence of the candid and judicious in their favourable Opinion of my late Work. The Approbation of Men of that Character is all, that I desire, and what the Consciousness indeed of my own Conviction gave me some reason to expect. The Case is much the same in this University, where, as far as I am informed, my

Book

Book has spread a general Persuasion of the Truth of affirm in it; and, what is still less to be expected in such a as this, without giving any sort of Offence by any Part which has yet been taken Notice of; tho' there are some cautious People always among us, who affect a Reserve and Silence on Subjects of this Kind, till they are instructed from abroad in what manner they ought to treat them.

Mr. *Fortin*, whom you mention, is a very worthy, learned, and judicious Man; yet had no reason, I think, to expect in my Work any Notice of that miraculous Story concerning the Attempt to rebuild *Jerusalem*: And your Answer on that Occasion was the very same, which I had given my self, when my Sentiments were asked upon the same Fact.

In drawing up my Remarks on that Miracle, which *Berriman* defends, I had got a Notion of some Objections made to the Reality of that Case of the *Ipswich* Woman, so as to render it of dubious Credit; which made me unwilling to venture upon it. But I have since been convinced, that the Fact was indisputably attested; and that the Transactions of the Royal Society would have supplied an Instance as strong and direct to my purpose, as that, which I borrowed from the *French* Academy.

The Notices, which you communicate, concerning Mr. *Dodwell*, *Joseph Mede*, &c. may be probably of Use to me hereafter: and since the Publication of my Book, I have found the Character of St. *Jerom* treated with much Freedom by some of our Orthodox Divines and Lovers of Antiquity, and among them by Dr. *Cave* himself. I had prepared a Note or two likewise for my *Introductory Discourse*, which I forgot afterwards to insert, concerning the Opinions of some of Queen *Elizabeth's* Divines, which I collected from *Strype*, who tells us in his *Annals*, that one *James Calfhill* (*), a Man much esteemed for his Knowledge

(*) He was first Student, and afterwards before his Consecration in August 1570. Canon of *Christ Church Oxford*, Dean of *Barking in Essex*, and Archdeacon of *Colchester*, and nominated by Queen *Elizabeth* to the Bishopric of *Worcester*, but died before his Consecration in August 1570. The Passage referr'd to in Dr. Middleton's Letter is in p. 23, of his Answer to *John Martial's Treatise of the Cross*; which Answer was printed at *London*, in 1565 in 4to.

of the Primitive Fathers, declared, that he had read them all, and strictly examined their Words and Assertions, from the very first Doctors of the Church after the apostolic Times, and had found *Imperfections in them all*; which, for the Reason given by Mr. Dodwell, he was unwilling to expose.

Manby has sent me down four small Pamphlets proposed to come out weekly, call'd *The Mitre and Crown, &c.* in which I find my self and my Work abused with great Rage and Virulence of Language, but without any Argument, that touched the Point in Question. I should guess the Writer to be some Nonjuring Divine, who writes partly for Bread, and partly for the Orthodox Cause of that antient and hereditary Right, which would give us both our Kings and Bishops from Rome.

I paid your Compliments to Mr. Green, who will be chosen our Divinity Professor this Week, without any Competition, after a probationary Lecture, which he is appointed to read on certain Texts of Scripture in the public Schools, on *Thursday* next. He is a very ingenious Man, of good Temper and Principles, and will fill the Chair, I dare say, with Credit. The new Master also of *Peter House*. Dr. Keen, is a very sensible and agreeable Man, and likely to make an useful *Head* both to the College and the University. By Dr. Heberden's Removal from us I have receiv'd a great and particular Loss, which I shall ever feel, tho' the Sense of it will be much abated, to hear of its being attended with all the Success on his Part, that I wish. One Advantage he is sure to meet with, and for which alone I shall envy him; I mean that Choice of good Company, with which London always abounds.

Pray make my Compliments to all Friends, and believe me with great Truth,

Dear Sir,

Your faithfull

and obedient: Servant,

C. M.

To

Head

To Mr. VENN.

Camb. Feb. 23, 1734-5.

SIR,

I Have been well informed, that, some Time ago, you took the Liberty to call me by Name an *Apostate Priest*. I find the same Calumny more publickly repeated in the *Miscellany* of Feb. 15, on a certain Person, not named, whose Writings have had the Misfortune to displease you; and as you are said to be concerned in the furnishing out this Weekly Paper, in Partnership with another worthy Divine, so I cannot avoid considering my self as the Object of your Abuse in both Cases.

The onely Thing that puzzles me, is to discover by what Principle of Christianity you think yourself justified in such a License of Calumniating; or how can you imagine a Behaviour so shocking to good Nature, good Sense, and good Manners, to be the Effect of any good Religion.

There must needs be some strange Mistake between us on one Side or the other. The Word *Religion* perhaps may have something in it equivocal, and denote a quite different Thing with you and with me. If your Religion prescribes, permits, or does not condemn, all such Defamation as impious and detestable, you clear me at once of Apostasy; for that Religion was never mine: And I cannot be charged with deserting what I had never professed.

Be so good, Sir, as to favour me with some Account of this Matter. I have a Right, I think, to require at least this Satisfaction. You are the onely Man who has ventured to call me an Apostate; and if you are an honest Man, you would not be particular in your Accusation, without a particular Assurance of the Truth of it; nor so forward with your Charge, without being as ready with your Proofs. Tell me then, in God's Name, nay, tell the Public all that you know of me: Speak out freely, charge every

every Thing, that either your own Malice suggests, or that of others has supplied you with. If you can convict me of any Thing immoral or irreligious, of any Apostasy from what is laudable or virtuous, I will take Shame to my self and own it; if not, shall seek no other Revenge than that of leaving you to the Reproach of your Conscience, and the Scorn of all good Men.

I could wish likewise to be informed of what Use it can be to the Interest of Christianity, of what Advantage to Religion, to proclaim to the World, that I am an Apostate. Should your *Miscellany* fall into the Hands of Men wavering in the Faith, staggering at every Scruple, shaken by every Breath of Scandal; and there must be many such in this sceptical Age; might it not be of Weight enough, in the Equilibrium of their Doubts, to turn the Scale on the Infidel-Side, to be assured by you, that a Clergyman trained in the Bosom of the Church, of some Reputation and many Friends, after a Life spent in Temperance, Study, and the Search of Truth, had by Choice and Judgement deserted it? It is the constant Policy of all Sects, to challenge to their Party, any Man of Merit, supposed even on the slightest Grounds to have discovered some Inclination to them; but your absurd Zeal would forcibly drive from the Service of Religion Men of Virtue and Learning, against their Will, against their Profession, against Truth.

The Person whom you treat so infamously, *convinced*, you say, *either of his Wickedness or Imprudence*, has desisted from troubling us further with his Profaneness. You allow it then to be a Question, whether it was Wickedness or Imprudence, that excited him to write: You allow, that whichever it was, he is now convinced, and has desisted. This one would think might have induced you to suffer a Man to be quiet, who suffers every Body else to be so: He repents, it seems; has chang'd his Conduct, troubles No-body; yet all this passes for nothing with you; your Charity gives no Quarter: His Repentance must be overlooked, his Apostasy always remember'd, and his very Conviction made a Matter of fresh Reproach to him. This is the true Spirit of Rome, that never spares a Penitent, who returns from Deser-

Dr. MIDDLETON'S LETTER to Mr. VENN.

tion. For whilst you take such Pains to murder a Reputation, seeking, according to you, to heal itself by Conviction and Amendment, you declare what you would do with Persons, were they as much in your Power.

But tho' he has desisted from troubling us himself, yet other Enemies, you say, *have refitted their Armour at his Forge; and the witty Socinian and crafty Jesuit make great Advantage of his Writings.* And here again, I must beg you to tell me, where it is, that these Adversaries are found tampering with his Works; where it is, that we may catch them quoting or building their Errors upon his Principles. If you cannot shew this, we must take the Insinuation for another Fiction of your Malice, as senseless as it is spiteful; a Bolt shot out at Random, which by falling somewhere luckily may chance to do Mischief. Is the Growth of Popery to be charged at last upon me, who have taken more Pains, and perhaps with more Success, to expose its Frauds and Corruptions, than most Clergymen now living? Ridiculous Calumny! No, Sir, the *Jesuits*, I can answer for it, will readily join Forces with you; will second your pious Endeavours of wounding my Reputation, ruining my Credit, and defaming me every where as a malicious, profane Apostate. It is here, after all, that I am touching the Bottom of the Sore: It was my Piece against Popery, that gave the first Scandal, and the first bad Impression of me. As soon as it was published, that learned Divine, your Partner, happening to meet me in the Street, told me, with a formal Face and Air of Importance, that he had been in Company with certain Friends, who declared themselves offended at it. I asked him, Whether they had found any Thing false in it? And perceiving that there was no Objection of that Sort, left him with no other Reflection, than that of a just Contempt for the Impertinence of the Information. I heard afterwards of another *****

These were the Men, who first began the Clamour, and raised the first Envy upon me; and I am now but paying the Arrears of that old Grudge, as you seem to intimate in this very *Miscellany*:

For you say, that it was natural for me to hate, what I had before betray'd: As if there was a Guilt upon me, previous to that I have lately been charged with, and the *Æra* of my Apostasy was to bear the same Date with my *Letter from Rome*. The more I reflect on your Rashness, the more I am inclin'd to impute it to some selfish Motive of Interest; some Hopes of Gain or Glory to accrue from it. It is common with the Writers of your Class, to run the Risk of a Pillory, to raise the Fame and Value of their Weekly Productions; and we read of an Hero in Antiquity, who set the Temple of his Country on Fire, to perpetuate his Name to Posterity. In this View, you act consistently, tho' in all Views wickedly. But to talk of reforming Morals, and recommending Religion, by a Method destructive of all Morality, and contrary to all Religion, is a mere Banter and Affront to Reason and common Sense. But whilst you dispense so freely the Titles of Profane and Apostate, let me recommend to you to consider the History of that first and chief Apostate, the Pattern, as well as Author, of every other Apostasy in the World. You will find his abominable Qualities summed up in this short Character, *The Accuser of the Brethren*, Rev. xii. 10. you will find him described, as defaming *Day and Night*; continually going about roaring and seeking to devour. This, says St. *John*, *is the old Dragon, which is the Devil and Satan*, Rev. xx. 2. And what, Sir, is the Devil, that is, Satan, but Names drawn from his very Essence, signifying the Adversary, the Hater, the Accuser of Mankind? His Followers, like their Master, are described by *David*, under the Person of *Doeg, the malicious Accuser of the Priests*: *With Tongues that devise Mischief; that love devouring Words*, Psal. lii. 2, 4. *and as Men set on Fire, whose Teeth are Spears and Arrows, and their Tongues a sharp Sword*, Psal. lvii. 4. This is the grand, the sovereign Apostasy; the Defection from all Religion; a Delight in defaming, an Alacrity in accusing; and I leave it to you to determine, where the Reproach of it is the most likely to fall, on your self or on me. You have called me an *Apostate*; all People, I dare say, or all at least who know me, will

Dr. MIDDLETON'S LETTER to Mr. VENN.

will be shocked at it: But should I chance to describe a certain Priest by the Title of the *Accuser*, there is scarce a Man in *England* who would not immediately think on Mr. VENN. A Reflection sufficient, methinks, to admonish you, that, instead of being so busy with other Mens Characters, it behoves you much more to turn your Thoughts and Attention to your own.

But if it be possible, after all, that I should ever have it in my Power to say of you, what you declare of me, that thro' a Conviction of your Wickedness, you had changed your Conduct, and desisted from Calumniating; I should still act on this, as I shall do on every Occasion, just contrary to the Example you set me; I should rejoice in the Change, begin to entertain Hopes and a better Opinion of you, and forget the *Accuser* to applaud the *Convert*.

CONYERS MIDDLETON.

F I N I S.